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THE SPECTATOR

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Jon Stewart to Speak on Nov. 14 in Margaret Bundy Scott Fieldhouse

by Eric Kuhn '09
Senior Editor

Jon Stewart is the next Hamilton College Sacerdote Great Name speaker.

Stewart is the executive producer and host of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" and will perform a stand-up comedy act on Friday, Nov. 14, at 7:30 p.m. in the Margaret Bundy Scott Field House.

Jon Stewart, host of "The Daily Show."

Assistant Dean of Students for Campus Life and Director of Student Activities Lisa Magnarelli '96, Coordinator of the Great Names Event, said, "I think the students are going to be so excited. I really feel this is a show for the students. Previous speakers have been educational, timely or historical and students have gotten excited about them, but on a basic level Stewart will amaze the students."

The choice of Stewart as the next Great Name speaker was the culmination of two surveys that were distributed to students and faculty members asking who they wanted to see come to campus. "Stewart was the overwhelming favorite for the faculty, staff and students," explained Magnarelli. While former British Prime Minister Tony Blair came in second, and Bill Gates came in third, Stewart was off the charts as Hamilton's top choice.

Jon Stewart is considered one of America's top social and comedic voices. A 2004 Pew Research Center poll famously revealed that 21 percent of 18 to 29 year olds cited "The Daily Show" and "Saturday Night Live" as the shows from which they obtained news about the presidential election, as opposed to 23 percent of youth who stated that ABC, CBS or NBC's nightly news broadcasts were their news information source.

Since hitting the air in 1999, Stewart and "The Daily Show" have received 24 Emmy® Award nominations and won 10 times. These include winning for Outstanding Writing for a Variety, Music or Comedy Program five times (2001, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006) as well as Outstanding Variety, Music or Comedy Series for the past five consecutive years (2003-2007). Stewart himself has been nominated for Outstanding Individual Performance in a Variety or Music Program four times (2002, 2003, 2005 and 2007). In 2001, "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" also received the prestigious Peabody® Award for excellence in its "Indecision 2000" campaign coverage and again in 2005 for "Indecision 2004." In 2005, Stewart became the executive producer for "The Colbert Report," which has been nominated and won numerous awards including the Peabody® Award.

As host of "The Daily Show," Stewart has interviewed presidents, heads-of-state, actors and authors. Many former Great Name speakers have actually been guests on the show, including Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter, Al Gore, Tom Brokaw, Rudy Giuliani and Madeline Albright.

According to Magnarelli, bringing Stewart to Hamilton was a success three years in the making. Stewart's high speaking fees proved to be a major challenge. While, contractually, Magnarelli cannot disclose how much Stewart is charging, she does admit he is the highest paid speaker in series history. "We had to seriously pursue it," Magnarelli said. Lucky for the Hamilton community, Stewart and soul legend Aretha Franklin, who performed in the same series last year, share the same agent.

Stewart will be performing stand-up comedy, with no question and answer feature following. No tickets will be needed for the free event, but seats for the general public will be limited to a first-come, first-served basis, as members of the Hamilton College community will receive priority seating. One difference in this year's event is a limit to the number of guests students can bring, from three guest passes last year to one this year. Faculty will be able to be accompanied by two guests. There will be a reception and photo-op following the performance and students will be allowed to participate in a lottery for invitations to the after-party.

Hamilton's press release for the event states, "This event will contain language that some people find offensive and may include content not appropriate for children and adolescents." In her office a clearly excited Magnarelli laughed, saying that while "The language might be bad, I don't have to tell you the content won't be."

Information about large group reservations (20-40 people) and handicapped seating will be available on Friday, Sept. 5, on the Hamilton Web site (http://www.hamilton.edu/greatnames) and on the INFO line, (315) 859-4636.

What You Need to Know:

-The event will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Margaret Bundy Scott Field House on Friday, Nov. 14
-Tickets will be free for Hamilton students with ID
-One guest pass will be allowed per student
-Up to 500 passes will be available for community members
-More information to come; keep checking your email!

KJ Extension Completed

by Scott Bixby '11
News Editor

In comparison to the North Side of campus, host to an eclectic array of Georgian, Gothic Revival, and Seventies Deconstructivist architecture, the Kirkland Campus has been fairly homogenous in appearance since its construction in the 1960's. However, Kirkland Campus' main educational facility, the Kirner-Johnson Building, has received a much-needed facelift, combining the angularity and utilitarian design that have become a signature of the Kirkland Campus with modern concepts and ecologically-minded improvements.

The renovation and expansion of Kirner-Johnson has been in the planning stages since 2004, and has cost over $23 million to bring to reality. The architecture was meant to echo urban design and architecture in the middle of Central New York, pulling foot traffic toward a de facto campus center. The atrium and common space in the center of the addition mimics the popular Wellin Atrium in the Science Center.

In addition to the noticeable features of the Kirner-Johnson renovation, including the 40-foot wall with cascading water and the horseshoe-shaped class spaces, less conspicuous innovations and features mark much of the new space. Environmentally friendly materials used for construction, more efficient, low-volume air systems, and heating coils under the Martin's Way extension are just a few ways the project has modernized the 40 year old building.

The project has done more than beautify the Kirner-Johnson Building, though; it has also massively increased office and educational space. The renovation tripled the size of the Writing Center to 2,850 square feet of space for writing assistance, as well as quadrupled the size of the Oral Communication Center, which now features motion-activated video cameras to ease critiquing of student presentations by professors.

The estate of Curt Wilhelm '40 funded part of the renovation of Kirner-Johnson, which finished on schedule with classes now being taught in all eight new teaching areas.

The new Kirner-Johnson atrium.

PHOTO BY RYN STECK '12

Amethyst Initiative Looks into College Drinking

by Olivia B. Waxman '11
News Writer

Some members of the Hamilton community are raising their glasses to President Joan Hinde Stewart, who is one of more than 120 college presidents to sign the Amethyst Initiative this summer, a pledge to re-assess the effectiveness of the minimum drinking age.

The Amethyst Initiative, named after the eponymous jewel that protects against drunkenness, is part of a movement spearheaded by John McCardell, President Emeritus of Middlebury College and founder of Choose Responsibility. Choose Responsibility is a non-profit committed to initiating an open dialogue about the national drinking age, which has been in place since 1984 when Congress passed the National Minimum Drinking Age Bill. The bill would have limited highway funds for states that legalized the purchase of alcohol by persons under the age of 21. The pact has been steadily gaining new signatories since it was formally introduced at a June meeting of the Annapolis Group, a coalition of America's premier liberal arts colleges.

The signatories of the Amethyst Initiative do not advocate a specific drinking age. They do, however, challenge legislators to examine whether the National Minimum Drinking Age Act's 10 percent reduction in federal highway funds is worth the fallout of the 1984 law: an underground culture of underage "binge-drinking" marked by fake I.D. use.

"Binge drinking is a serious problem on most college campuses," President Stewart explained. "Research tells us that 44 percent of college students have engaged in binge drinking in the past two weeks. So it is not surprising that every college president I know worries about the potentially terrible consequences of binge drinking. While we examine and debate this issue, I have every expectation that Hamilton students will exhibit the clear and cogent thinking and engage in the thoughtful discussion for which they are known."

John Molfetas '09 applauds President Stewart for signing the pledge and looks forward to future dialogue on campus.

"Alcohol is sort of a taboo topic, and still, it is around us everywhere at Hamilton," Molfetas said. "I think that there needs to be a student debate surrounding the issue of the drinking age. We all need to become engaged with this issue."

Class Representative Jeff Escalante '11 was candid with *The Spectator* about the existence of binge drinking on campus, and believes that there are both pros and cons to lowering the minimum drinking age.

"It is true that the culture around drinking is that you drink to get trashed, not just have a couple beers for fun," Escalante said. "I feel that [lowering the drinking age] is something that's worth a shot, but should be closely monitored to see if it's working or not, and if not, be changed back quickly. Honestly, I personally think that it would just increase drinking a lot, but I could be wrong."

Hamilton Charter Trustee and former *TIME* correspondent Barrett Seaman '67 explored the drinking culture on college campuses in his 2005 book *Binge: Campus Life in an Age of Disconnection and Excess*, which won the Research Society on Alcoholism's 2008 Journalism Award for its contribution to the field of alcohol research. Seaman, who is a director of Choose Responsibility, commends President Stewart for signing the Amethyst Initiative and endorses 18 as the legal drinking age.

"There's nothing magic about 18, except that that is the age we use to define adulthood in so many other areas," Seaman contends. "If the voting age was 21, as it once was, if one could not enlist in the military until 21, if one could not marry or sue or be sued or sign a contract or have one's privacy protected until 21, then I could see a 21-year-old minimum drinking age as consistent. But that's not the way we do things."

Seaman admits, however, that the Amethyst Initiative faces a "formidable foe" in Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), which "has a $50 million-plus budget to throw at us." MADD also has the support of the American Medical Association (AMA), the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), and the Governors Highway Safety Association. Moreover, 52% of Americans support the current drinking age, according to a Rasmussen Reports poll released this week.

Seaman dismissed critics' arguments as "flawed" and an obstacle to "reasonable people [who] are open to trying things differently, recognizing that what we've been doing isn't working." But MADD immediately leapt into action, urging Americans to write letters to their governors and the college presidents who signed the petition to persuade them to take their names off the list.

Soon after, two of the initiative's original signatories—Robert M. Franklin of Atlanta's Morehouse College and Kendall Blanchard of Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus, GA—backed out of the Amethyst Initiative because of the ensuing backlash from its opponents. "It was clear to me that [the critics] didn't see this as a dialogue," President Blanchard told *The New York Times* in an August 21 article. "They saw this as some kind of effort on our part to turn our schools into party schools."

Fifty-seven percent of Americans feel that college presidents are not cracking down hard enough on underage drinkers, and MADD, which credits the 1984 law for deterring drunk driving, lashed out at signatories of the Amethyst Initiative on their behalf.

"Parents should think twice before sending their teens to these colleges or any others that have waved the white flag on underage and binge drinking policies," MADD National President Laura Dean-Mooney said in an August 19 press release. "By signing onto this initiative, these presidents have made the 21 law nearly unenforceable on their campuses. In fact, I call into question whether or not these campuses are bothering to enforce the 21 drinking age."

But Hamilton Dean of Students Nancy Thompson does not think age is the issue here. "I actually am far more interested in student behavior than age," said Thompson. "I believe we need to address any student behavior that is disruptive, destructive, or dangerous and strive to encourage and reward responsible choices."

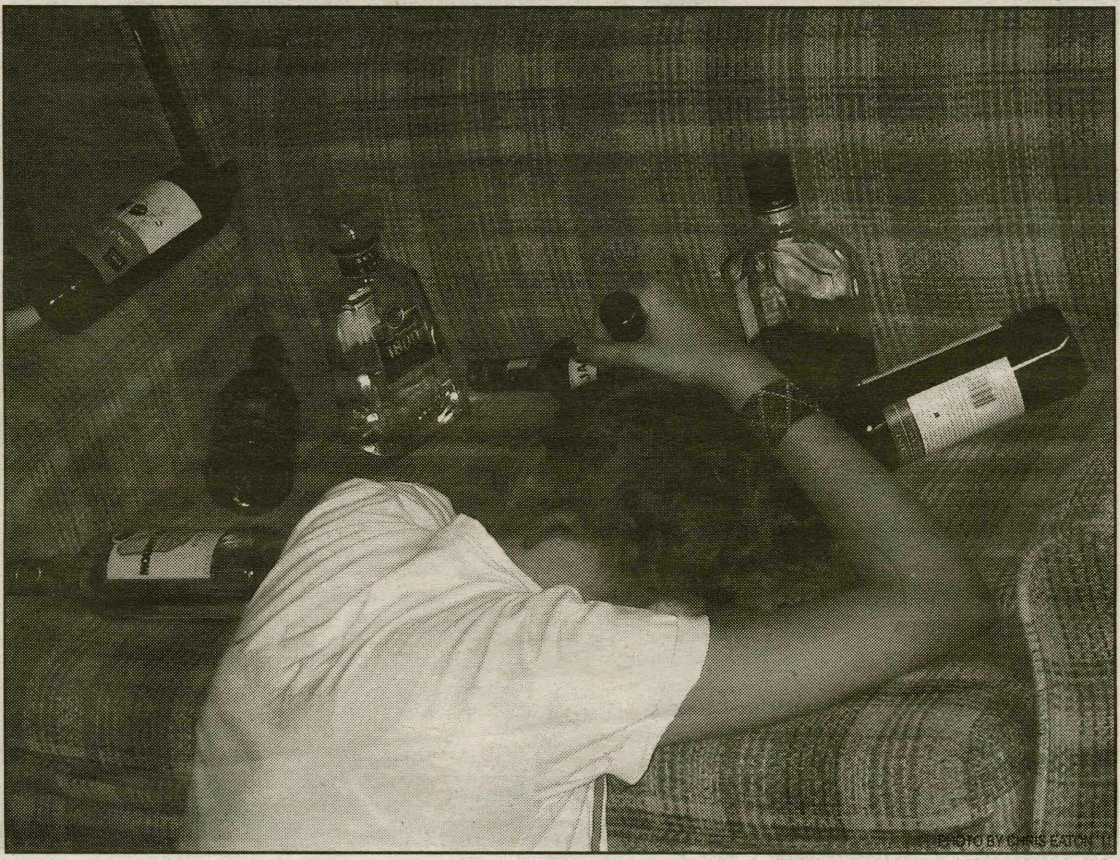


PHOTO BY CHRIS EATON '11

Like other colleges, Hamilton struggles with binge drinking.

48 New Faculty Appointments for 2008

by Kara Labs '09
News Editor

Now that a new year has started, you may have seen some new faces around the Hamilton campus and I am not just talking about the freshmen. There are 48 new faculty appointments this year including visiting assistant professors, visiting associate professors, distinguished lecturers, coaches, visiting instructors, endowed professors, assistant professors, associate professors, teaching fellows, postdoctoral fellows, Mellon Faculty Exchange Scholars, and lecturers.

Assistant and associate professors are professors on the tenure track. Visiting professors are here for a limited time and usually replace people who are on sabbatical or temporarily fill the position. Distinguished lecturers are people like alumni who come back and lecture in a specific subject. Instructors have not yet finished their Ph.D. but are on track to. Once they have completed it, they will be given the title of Assistant Professor. There are also a few endowed professors new at Hamilton. Additionally, each year Hamilton and Colgate do an exchange program called the Mellon Faculty Exchange, where professors from Hamilton go and teach at Colgate and professors from Colgate come to Hamilton. This year we are happy to have two Mellon Exchange Scholars from Colgate.

In addition to that, there are six faculty members that have been at Hamilton for a number of years that were promoted, as of July 1st 2008, to the rank of Professor. These are: Professor of History Douglas Ambrose, Professor of Economics Paul Hagstrom, Professor of Music Lydia Hamessley, Professor of Religious Studies Stephenson Humphries-Brooks, Professor of English Catherine Kodat, and Professor of English Onno Oerlemans.

Dean of Faculty Joe Urgo was incredibly pleased about this year's appointments. "At Hamilton we are committed to having full-time positions," states Urgo. This is why at Hamilton graduate students do not teach classes. This attribute makes Hamilton unique and arguably more worthy of the tuition costs.

The new faculty, Dean Urgo continues, will offer a breath of new courses that will slightly alter the Hamilton curriculum for the better. Dean Urgo strongly suggests that students take advantage of these professors and their knowledge in their respective areas and take classes with them because some of them will not be with us for an extended period.

Overall, Dean Urgo was pleased with not only the quality of the new faculty, but with their enthusiasm as well as that of those students who were on search committees. "The faculty energy and effort," was immensely productive.

Convincing the faculty position applicants to choose Hamilton is the biggest challenge for the committees. Since the pool of applicants is very prestigious, they predictably have offers from other colleges, and it takes some precious time and effort to convince them that they would be a good fit for Hamilton.

One of the reasons Hamilton is so attractive to both students and faculty alike is the amount of participation on the part of the students in all aspects of campus life.

Since this search process for new faculty happens every year, departments and search committees are always looking for students to help them through the process and participate from start to finish.

If you are interested in being involved and if your department is searching for new faculty for next year, contact the head of your department.

AA Kicks Off Another Year on the Hill

by Haley Riemer-Peltz '12
News Writer

Hamilton College welcomed over half of its incoming first year class at the end of the summer through the Adirondack Adventure and Urban Service Experience pre-orientation programs. For the 24th year in a row, the enthusiastic AA leaders jumped around College Hill Road holding signs with inviting messages (e.g. "pay tuition here"; "Slytherin-->go to Colgate") and donned elaborate costume pieces such as ape masks, hula hoops and blue shirts that said "Adirondack Adventure."

After the eager and disoriented first years registered and moved into their new homes, the entire program met on the football field. There were ice-breakers, but not just the compulsory, run-of-the-mill ice-breakers. These ones involved weasels. The Adirondack Adventure participants were introduced to Andrew Jillings, the director of Hamilton's Outdoor Leadership Center and AA coordinator for 12 years.

The 228 participants were divided into groups of around nine, on average. Over the next two days, before the participants were released into the wilds of upstate New York, each group did more ice-breakers and team-building exercises on the low ropes course in the Glen.

On the fateful morn of Aug. 18, 2008, 23 AA trips and four USE trips departed from the Hill to rough it in the Adirondacks (and Utica). The different trips included hiking, canoeing, rock climbing, sea kayaking, base camp, and community service.

"From my own experience and what I have gathered from other AA leaders, this year went eerily well," commented senior trip leader, Steve Allinger '09. Allinger co-led the St. Regis Lakes Canoe Trip with Dani Forshay '11. Rumors have been widely spread that this is the best AA trip offered.

"Apart from there being no real accidents, the kids seemed to bond quickly and with less reservations than in the past," Allinger continued, Forshay agreed: "The Adirondack Adventure program is a huge part of what sets Hamilton apart for me and makes it more special than any other small liberal arts college I might have gone to instead.

"The AA community that participating freshmen are inducted into will be there throughout their four years here, and it serves as a solid reference point that they can always return to," she continued.

The USE program thrived this year, having grown from only one group in 2007 to four groups in 2008. "This is the first year where USE had more than one trip and the two programs [AA and USE] were very much integrated and run in the same manner," says USE trip leader and AA coordinator Jane Cowles '10. The USE trips went out into Utica and worked with direct service organizations such as the Underground Café, the food kitchen at Hope House, and Habitat for Humanity.

The USE program aims to provide an introduction and a foundation for continued service during the semester. USE participants often continue with HAVOC, Alternative Spring Break, local internships, community-based research, and service-learning course work.

"This year, everything ran perfectly! There were no major problems (some crazy thunderstorms, but that was it), and it was just really fun!" added Cowles.

Another addition to AA was the introduction of online registration, which makes the program much more accessible to international students. "We definitely got a few more people we otherwise wouldn't have gotten," Jillings commented.

After the groups had 3-4 days in the wilderness and in the city, the program participants were broken up into four large groups and sent to stay at different camps for the high ropes courses. One of the camps that some of the groups stayed at was Raquette Lake Camp. The camp setting provided a nice change of pace for participants of both AA and USE. The AA kids were especially appreciative of the cold, porcelain toilets with miraculous running water. The kids got the experience of spending a day at a high ropes course with several different challenges, including a zip-line.

The experience at camp ended with a campfire, where anyone who wanted to could say something to reflect on his or her trip, or something learned. "The campfire was a really awesome way to end the trip because we had all become so close with our groups," said AA participant Allie Boyaris '12. Pre-orientation ended the next night at the Glen House with an AA banquet.

"About halfway through most trips I find that the kids realize that hiking and paddling is not the purpose of AA, it's the friends they are making," reflected Allinger with a tear in his eye. "It proves that if you spend a dirty, smelly, cheese infested week in the woods with anyone, you will find that you have more than a little in common."

Overall, most of the AA participants would agree that the program provides a great introduction to Hamilton, and yields a smoother transition into orientation.

Hamilton first years participate in Adirondack Adventure.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LAUREN MOON '09

College Guides Give Hamilton Mixed Reviews

Hali Baumstein '11
News Writer

With a new school year comes a new list of rankings. Once again, Hamilton has made it onto some of the United States' most prestigious lists of college rankings.

On *U.S. News and World Report*'s ranking of liberal arts schools, Hamilton sits at number twenty, tied with Oberlin College in Ohio.

In this ranking system, each school receives a number that is formulated by factoring in many different criteria. These include a school's peer assessment, faculty resources, retention rate, student selectivity, graduation rate performances, financial resources, and alumni giving rates.

Hamilton received a total score of 81 out of 100, which places it behind Colgate University and Smith College, with scores of 82, and before the United States Naval Academy, with a score of 80.

Although Hamilton sits behind schools like Williams, Amherst, and Swarthmore in these rankings, it remains near the top of a list containing hundreds of liberal arts colleges. The rankings are closer than ever—each subsequent school has a score that is generally only one or two points lower than the one before it, and many schools, are tied.

U.S. News and World Report also sorts schools into four different "tiers" based on their scores. Hamilton falls into tier number one, the highest possible.

Hamilton made a number of other lists in *U.S. News and World Report*. These lists include "Most Selective," with a 27.7 percent acceptance rate, "Most Students in a Fraternity," with a 29 percent pledge rate, and "Most Undergraduates Who Study Abroad," with a 45 percent study abroad rate. In addition, Hamilton made the list of colleges with the "Most International Students," as approximately five percent of the student body are from other countries. On a list of liberal arts schools with the best price value after financial aid is given, Hamilton is number eighteen.

Hamilton appeared on a number of lists in *Princeton Review* as well, including "Best Northeastern Colleges" and the "Best 368 Schools in the United States." Both lists place schools in alphabetical order rather than ranking them. Furthermore, *Princeton Review* awarded Hamilton with a high academic rating of 95 out of 100.

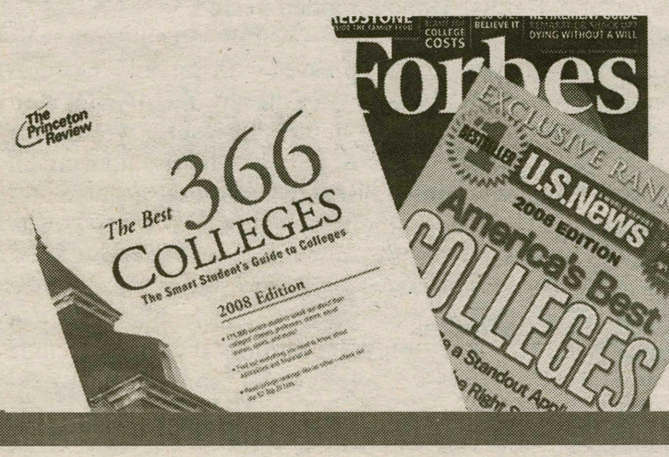
Additionally, *Princeton Review* named Hamilton number seventeen on a list entitled "Lots of Beer." This is a subsequent list that contains the top twenty schools that drink large amounts of beer. Joining Hamilton on the list are Penn State University, University of Florida, and Colgate University.

Hamilton also showed up in the *Forbes Magazine* rankings of the best colleges in America. The school is ranked number 24, right behind number 23 Stanford. This list contains nearly 600 schools, once again putting Hamilton very close to the top.

Just how reliable are these rankings? *The U.S. News and World Report* website acknowledges that no one can judge a college based solely on rankings, considering there are a number of non-measurable factors that play into an individual's college experience. In addition to that the rating system changes slightly with each passing year.

However, the site also states that because they rank colleges based on certain criteria that has proven reliable over the years, they believe their list gives students a good place to start when beginning the college search.

Regardless of exact numbers, Hamilton has consistently appeared near the top of the list when it comes to college rankings.



THE SPECTATOR

Hamilton Slips Up (Down)

On August 17, *U.S. News & World Report* released their college rankings with disappointing news coming to those students preparing to start school back on the Hill. Hamilton College dropped three slots – to twentieth place – behind Colgate and tied with Oberlin. This news came on the heels of the Princeton Review, another widely regarded list of college rankings, which ranks colleges in smaller groups such as "Great College Towns" and "Professors Get High Marks." Hamilton ranked number 17…in the "Lots of Beer" category.

How could this have happened? In the last year, Hamilton concluded a highly successful, and well on target, capital campaign that raised $175 million. We enrolled a freshman class with the highest average SAT scores in history. Two sports teams reached national tournaments, with the Women's Lacrosse team winning the NCAA Championship. In a time when high school students are fiercely competing for spots at elite colleges, it would make sense that after this year Hamilton would be moving up in the pack. Instead, we rank lower than schools that have higher acceptance rates and, as far as we can see, not nearly the forward momentum of this College.

We can decry the system behind the rankings, as many have. Some believe there are biases towards more nationally well-known schools, others see it as a force for turning schools into brands and educations into commodities. And after all, how can you comprehensively describe the quality and "worth" of a school and the education it offers? We applaud President Joan Hinde Stewart in joining other presidents of elite Liberal Arts Colleges in not participating in "ranking" fellow colleges (part of the processes used by *U.S. News*) and also in making a decision not to publicize where we stand in the rankings either. But if we want to stay out of the game, we can't simply sit idle and complain.

Both the administration and the student body need to understand that while ranking systems such as *U.S. News & World Report* and the Princeton Review may not be the end all and be all, they are certainly a factor in how the world sees our College and thus our degrees. While movement a few notches South on the list might not warrant that many frowns, we must ensure the trend does not continue. There are those who are paid to ensure our rankings remain strong and that our image outside the bubble is positive (our peer reviews did decline this year). But we not only blame those in admissions or the administration, but ourselves.

As the student body moves forward this year, we have to remind ourselves that we are all in this game together. When you head home for breaks and are asked where you go to school, why reply with "Oh just a small school in Upstate New York"? When you see a tour group walking around campus, smile and wave. Sign up to host a prospective student. Or just simply wear those Hamilton flip-flops with pride. While Hamilton may never achieve a number-one ranking in the eyes of a far-removed news magazine, let's at least try to beat Colgate.

-The Spectator

THE SPECTATOR

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Hamilton's Orientation 2008 Changes the Pace

by Daniel Steinman '12
News Writer

Obviously, you noticed the fall semester started a little earlier this year, and, abnormally, classes commenced on the Thursday before Labor Day. This alteration will allow for a full week of vacation over Thanksgiving break. It also fit well with a new orientation format for incoming students. This year, Hamilton compressed new student orientation into a five-day schedule instead of its usual weeklong "Monday to Monday" timetable. This included a more fully packed itinerary of assemblies and activities each day. In some cases, there were as many as sixteen in one day, including meals.

Coordinator of Special Programs Amy James, who organized this year's program for all 478 new Hamilton students, explained that in past years, students expressed that they were ready and anxious for classes to start earlier. James agreed, saying academics are "what we're here for." This year, "we got to the point a lot more quickly; the point is to go to class."

Madeline Caudle '10, a student coordinator of orientation, said, "the 'summer camp' aspect of sitting around and having lazy summer days was eliminated, and I see that as a more productive change, in terms of scheduling." Many first-year students commented that they had become tired of returning to Wellin Hall after opening ceremonies, advising meetings, diversity training, and the returning "Sex Signals" program.

Kathryn Kroleski '09, another student coordinator, agreed that what she described as a 'jam-packed' schedule is positive for the program. "We are always going to have those kids who miss home. It seems better to give them activities, so they have less time to think about what they're missing at home." Kayla Brendon '12 commented that the scheduling had just that effect.

When told that orientation was usually longer than it had been this year, Brendon exclaimed "Oh, my God!" She did state, however, that one positive aspect of orientation was that the longer it went on the more people she was able to meet.

"One goal of orientation is to help students meet other students and feel comfortable on campus, but having it shorter didn't have a negative effect," James said.

Still, some of most popular activities, such as the dance party, had to be removed, which Madeline said was "the biggest complaint she heard from orientation leaders." She pointed out though that they kept the more unique events, like Big Prize BINGO and Open-Mic Night.

Sarah Kelley '12 said she would have preferred a dance party rather than the first night of group meetings that she referred to as "forced" and "super-awkward." She said, "It would have been better to have a social situation we could have on our own terms."

There were a few additions to the program, including an orientation group-based local community service initiative, Hamilton Serves. Many new students and orientation leaders called it the highlight of the week. Student orientation leader Ben Wilson's '11 group went to Clinton Elementary School to perform work on the playground.

"After we were working all morning, we broke for lunch and sat in the shade by the playground. It was during that lunch where I looked around the group and realized in just four short days that these individuals were working together to do amazing work and bonded over their blistered hands," Ben said, "But I think it forced the first years to acclimate faster and jump into life at Hamilton."

James said that she received many positive anecdotal responses from students, and is considering moving the activity towards an earlier time slot in orientation. "Hamilton Serves was logistically labor-intensive. But I think that it was worth it," she said.

This is one of many programs James will be re-evaluating after listening to students and faculty: "We always meet and talk about what worked, what didn't work, and what could be better, so we can incorporate it into orientation next year." It looks like we might get a week-long break for Thanksgiving next year, too.

PHOTO COURTESY OF COLIN CHAPIN '12 **New Hamilton students participating in Orientation Week registration.**

Inside the Faculty Meeting - September 2, 2008

The Spectator will now be attending every single faculty meeting. Most of it is tedious, technical and mundane, but we intend to report on only the exciting parts for you!

Sandwiched between recognizing new faculty and a report from Monica Inzer on the Class of 2012, Dean Joseph Urgo introduced a new technology to the assembled faculty: the iClicker. The iClicker is an electronic voting device that looks not unlike the controller for the Nintendo Wii. iClickers will enable the faculty to vote anonymously via a remote, which sends in signals to a receiver attached to a computer, providing instant results.

For the faculty members that sit on the edge of their seats waiting for the hand-counted ballot method to produce crucial results on Faculty Handbook changes and the like, the iClicker might be a welcoming new addition to Faculty Meetings. But it took only a matter of seconds after Urgo announced his new idea for Associate Professor of Computer Science Mark Baley to jump up and question the legitimacy of the new voting procedure. "Doesn't the faculty need to vote on this?" he asked. Urgo's response: "no." Baley pointed out that the faculty handbook explicitly states that voting must occur with hand votes or secret ballot. iClickers might expedite decision-making by the faculty and thus ruin democracy as the faculty knows it.

Other faculty members would have liked to have been consulted before the installment of the new voting devices. They cost $27 per voting unit, and $180 for the receiver. "Can't we put this money towards something else?" Baley asked, "Like giving all the faculty members iPods?" Thus, while no provisions in the handbook exist for voting via the iClicker, a test demonstration vote did commence. The question: "Is the iClicker a good idea?" Five faculty members were asked to answer "Yes" or "No." 80 percent answered in the affirmative.

For those faculty members who had their hearts set on a Nano, they sell those in the campus bookstore.

Think you could own Bob Woodward? Does Carl Bernstein quiver at the mention of your name?

Join Spec News!

Email Kara Labs (klabs) or Scott Bixby (sbixby) to see your name in print!

A Fresh Perspective: First Thoughts on the Hill

by Allison Eck '12
Insights and Ideas Writer

In the weeks before my first drive up to Hamilton, friends frequently accosted me with quizzical looks.

"Hamilton? What's that?" they would ask, trying their best not to feel threatened by my decision to go somewhere other than a large state school.

"Is that…a good school?" They didn't want to offend me by doubting that Hamilton was in league with Harvard, Yale, Princeton, etc., but they found the audacity to ask nonetheless. I knew that Hamilton was an amazing place, and I knew I belonged there.

So why was I in tears as my parents drove me up the Hill? Of course, it was hard for me to say goodbye to my family. The rest was more difficult to analyze. I think it was the upperclassmen screaming at us as we drove in with signs and costumes, guitars and Greek Olympian leaves in their hair. Not that I was terrified of them, but I thought it was so cool that upperclassmen were really excited about first-years arriving. The Hamilton pride I saw glowing in their faces, the labyrinth of shadows cast from the sunlit trees, and the magnificent, scholarly buildings made me feel like I had driven into paradise.

Not going on an Adirondack Adventure trip was an obstacle I had to conquer. Without a group of people I already knew, I was a little lost. I witnessed dozens of clusters of students who had pooped in holes together – what other kind of bonding is more powerful than that? However, I feel that maybe not going on an AA trip has an upside. Although living in far-away Wertimer manifests a tendency to cling to other Wertimerians, I've been able to meet many different types of people in the past week without having to latch onto only one group.

One thing I have noticed is there is never a lack of things to do here. If I am lucky enough to have sparse homework one weekend, there are always concerts and events to go to. There is always someone down in the lounge to talk to or play "Apples to Apples" with. There are always places across campus to meditate and reflect. There are always professors to seek advice from. There are always things to read, clubs to join, opinions to ponder, coffee to sip, and friends to laugh with. And of course, there are always parties to go to…or avoid.

And then there are the Hamilton rituals. Only our school gives its students a version of Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* when they matriculate. I am so proud to be a Hamilton nerd!

PHOTO BY CHRIS EATON

The iconic stone wall is the first sight to welcome both upperclassmen and first years as they enter the campus.

From the class of 2012

To represent their matriculation at Hamilton, first years came to the Kirkland Cottage to sign the College Register.

PHOTO BY CHRIS EATON

by Lauren Magaziner '12
Insights and Ideas Writer

I wish I could make a big neon sign that said:
Name:Lauren Magaziner
Possible Major: Creative Writing
Place of Origin: Philly
Dorm: Major
Classes: Intro to Philosophy, Latin I, Literature and Ethics, and Theater 101

It would make introductions a whole lot easier. Imagine skipping through that awkward series of questions and heading right to the "good stuff." The stuff deep down that I really want to know about you, really nitty-gritty things, like if you have ever thought Furbies were freaky, if you've ever been obsessed with Sailor Moon or Pokémon, and if you've ever played (and loved) Mario Kart.

I think I've introduced myself to a million people… and yes, we used the normal "neon sign" roadmap: name, major, birthplace, dorm, classes. Talking to current first years is difficult; talking to former first years is easy. I always have a million questions for upperclassmen, but then they always ask me a question that throws me off-guard: "How do you like Hamilton?"

Well, I guess it's complicated.

My first instinct is to shout: I've only been here for three weeks… how the hell am I supposed to know? Then I remember the homework, and manage to successfully suppress a groan. Then, I think about all the "hellos" I've said to strangers on Martin's Way and the reciprocated smiles, and I remark about what a wonderful place Hamilton College is.

The truth is, I don't know what to think. So far it's been a 60s party from a 60s movie, group poops (just kidding… my AA trip didn't actually do this, though we joked about it constantly), riddles while canoeing downstream, a candle vigil, a campfire at a ropes course, growing close to my AA group (but then hardly seeing them when I returned to campus, unfortunately), a massive stampede to sign up for clubs, anxiousness while clicking the refresh button on WebAdvisor to see how many spots were filled before I could register at my very late time, trying to find my classes with an unhelpful campus map (not realizing that I was standing right in front of the building I was looking for), and a crazy midnight breakfast incident.

No denying Hamilton College is a foreign place to me. And even though I had to repeat my name, major, birthplace, dorm, and class schedule more times than the days I've lived, all in all, I think it's been a good three weeks.

Words of Wisdom for the Frosh

by Thomas Yarnell '10
Insights and Ideas Editor

Before I begin, I feel obligated to note that I've never been a first-year at Hamilton College. I spent my freshman year at the University of Iowa, and then transferred to Hamilton for my sophomore year. Now a junior, this is my first time coming back to a familiar campus, and thus, the first time I am no longer "new."

That means no orientation. No meet and greets. No name tags. No harrowing fire safety presentation that silences an auditorium full of excited eighteen year olds. (If you didn't skip it, then you know exactly what I mean.)

The new guy: It's a role that I no longer wish to play, but one that the class of 2012 now embraces. With that in mind, I offer them the following suggestions based on my first-hand experience as a (two-time) new kid in college. Some of these will seem straight out of that corny college advice book your mom bought you with the best of intentions. Others may seem like plain common sense. Regardless, as you settle into the community on the Hill, these guidelines should help ease the transition no matter where you come from:

1. Just say "Hi."
Take a page from Slim Shady and make your refrain "Hi, my name is ______." While this sounds ridiculously simple, it's not always easy. Give people the benefit of the doubt though, especially your fellow first-years, and assume that they too are eager to form new friendships. I guarantee that for every instance you feel dismissed, ignored, or trapped in a painfully awkward conversation about what classes you're taking, there are 10 more in which you'll meet wonderfully engaging and helpful people, all through a simple hello.

2.Talk to your professors.
Professors are one of the greatest resources on this campus. Don't make your first trip to office hours a plea for an extension. Instead, go talk with professors often, especially if you enjoy their class. You'll find that their wisdom extends beyond the realm of academia. Ask them about life, about their own experiences. They are here for you and they will be happy to see you outside the classroom.

3. Balance your classes.
This one means different things for different people. It obviously depends on what type of student you are. That being said, everyone would benefit from taking at least one class that serves as a break from the rest. Just because you're considering a concentration in biology does not mean you can't take an English course. Strike a balance across disciplines, and also with the potential workload. If you enrolled in three very difficult classes, for example, pick an "easy" course as your fourth. The "relief" class may just end up being your favorite one.

4. Leave your comfort zone.
Once you establish a core group of friends, it's easy to stay within that group. It's natural. Don't deny others the opportunity to get to know you, though. Even the occasional effort to branch out will provide breathing room for your closest friendships while opening new doors with others. If your best friends are friends worth having, they won't take it personally when you add some variety to your social life.

5. Drink responsibly.
Keystone may taste like water, but it's not.

Everyone has an opinion.

Share yours.

E-mail us at specii@hamilton .edu to write for Insights and Ideas.

Face Off: Amethyst Initiative - Should We Care?

Yes

by Sam Gomez '10
Insights and Ideas Writer

The Amethyst Initiative, which was recently signed by President Joan Stewart, is a statement to legislators that "It's time to rethink the drinking age" because "twenty-one is not working." The initiative consists of over one hundred and twenty participating colleges and universities and seeks to foster a constructive, informed debate over the effectiveness of the National Minimum Drinking Age Act. Passed in 1984, the law imposed a federal highway funding cut of 10 percent to any state that did not immediately change their drinking age from eighteen to twenty one.

The act sought to reduce drunk driving fatalities in those between the ages of eighteen to twenty one. The perception at the time was that if young people could not drink in public, then they would not be endangering themselves by driving drunk and participating in other risky behavior. However, much like prohibition, the law is difficult (if not impossible) to enforce as drinking is something that goes on behind closed doors, away from the eyes of the authority and those who would monitor the consumption of inexperienced drinkers. Binge drinking can result in injuries, sexual assaults, heath problems and fatalities, yet for many politicians and legislators, the issue is taboo. The lack of any serious debate over changing the drinking age has resulted in inaction by the state and national legislators that are responsible for crafting public policy.

A forum is needed to discuss new ideas for preventing risky behavior by young drinkers and teaching responsible consumption patterns for those individuals who choose to drink. Right now, teenagers learn to drink at the only places where they can get alcohol: house, dorm, or off-campus parties. In an atmosphere where almost anything goes and competitive drinking is not only present but common, young adults learn consumption patterns that are irresponsible and dangerous. By the time a young adult has reached twenty-one it is likely that he or she already has experience with alcohol and has established some sort of consumption pattern. Unfortunately, for many college students, that consumption pattern is one of binge drinking and unnecessary risks. By allowing legal adults to drink publicly, they would learn responsible consumption patterns in public, where if they were in danger of injuring themselves or others action would be taken. The Amethyst Initiative seems to be the best plan that is in the works to move towards this goal. By encouraging informed, intelligent, constructive debate over the effectiveness of current policy, the Initiative could be the push that legislators need to open up and start discussing these issues in a national forum.

No

by Jessie Brown '12
Insights and Ideas Writer

The Amethyst Initiative, comprised of "chancellors and presidents of several universities and colleges" across the country, neither calls for the raising or lowering of the drinking age, says President Stewart in her e-mail regarding her signing of this new initiative. It simply states that the issue should be discussed. This claim is valid, as the law hasn't stopped underage students from drinking, but the Initiative is irrelevant to the Hamilton community.

In 1984, the National Drinking Age Act passed, forcing the states to raise their drinking age to twenty-one or forfeit 10 percent of their federal highway money. The purpose was to keep people from drinking until they are responsible enough to accept the consequences. However, eighteen is old enough to make important decisions such as who to vote for; shouldn't that be old enough to consume alcohol too? As President Stewart points out, the law is "nearly a quarter of a century old" and is in need of a reexamination. In this age of technology, fake IDs are becoming more and more realistic. Since the law won't change the people, maybe it's time the people change the law.

Does a signature on a document that is only in its infancy really determine whether we can debate the efficacy of the law? Our president's signature only shows that she realizes the law is ineffective, but as this issue affects all students in all schools, should a name on a paper decide whether we can argue about it? Up until this point, many have just accepted that the law is the law and have done nothing to contest it, but the drinking has not ceased, and no initiative will change that. If Hamilton students will party regardless of the law, the Amethyst Initiative won't change anything, and therefore has no place here.

There is also the simple fact that nothing will change whether we discuss drinking. Thanks to freedom of speech and open-minded RAs, those who want to have these debates already do, while those who don't want to simply don't. Some students may choose not to drink, for whatever reason, but many still do; the law has no effect on that. Campus safety, while present at campus parties, will take care of anyone who falls victim to effects of excessive drinking, but they do not enforce any of the measures necessary to prevent underage drinking in the first place. Should the drinking age change to eighteen, they have even less reason to do so.

President Stewart signed this initiative in hopes of finding some way to keep Hamilton students safe. However, if we have blatantly ignored the legal drinking age, who is to say we will not ignore whatever laws come from this? With a few self-imposed safety measures in place, those of us that wish to party can do so in a responsible manner.

Thumbs up

New KJ = Very classy. Unfortunately, I'll give it two weeks before I'm scooping coins out of the waterfall for beer money.

Returning from a semester abroad in Australia: For six magical months my upstate New York accent actually helped me get laid.

All campus spam: I'm sick of hearing that Knit Happens, but yes, I would like a larger, firmer erection.

The 2008 presidential elections will finally answer the age old question: Who do white men hate more, blacks or women?

Thumbs down

Students no longer able to use equivalency for Ben & Jerry's. Great, next time I rip a grav bong I'll just throw myself off the chapel and save myself the disappointment.

Taco Bell moves out of Sanger Town mall. Hey townies from the VT! Pull your tongues out of your sisters' mouths long enough to realize that Fourthmeal was the only thing you had going for you.

US News and World Report: Hamilton: 20, Colgate: 17. Thanks Joan, I hope you enjoy your Eurotrip while we get curb stomped by a pack of toothpaste-sucking iceheads.

Who Cares?

If I were not a buffer, I wonder what I'd be... modest.

Freshman: You may be smarter, better looking, and more athletic, but you still live in Dunham so get the f#@k out of my sushi line.

Freshmen moving in large packs: It's so much harder to single out the sickly and weak.

Almost burning down your dorm making a pizza: Apparently, something you've been doing since you were twelve isn't that simple after a night of Keystone.

by Steve Allinger '09
& Anthony DelConte '10

ADVERTISEMENTS

Interested in Student Assembly?

Elections for the Class of 2012 will be held on Tuesday September 16th for the following positions:

Class President (1 Position Available)
Class Treasurer/ Secretary (1 Position Available)
Class Representatives (5 Positions Available)
Honor Court Representative (1 Position Available)

To Apply:

1. Submit a signature sheet (see e-mail attachment). Class Presidents and Treasurers need 50 signatures; all other positions need 25 signatures. All signatures must be from members of the candidate's class year and no person may sign more signature sheets for a given office than there are positions available (ie. Any student may only sign 1 class president signature sheet, 5 class rep sheets, etc).
2. Write a platform of no more than 100 words explaining your interest in the position. Platforms longer than 100 words will be truncated at the 100th word.
3. Attend a short, but mandatory briefing meeting on Monday September 8th at 5:30 in ELS.

Signature sheets and platforms will be accepted no later than the end of the day (Midnight) on Monday September 8th. Email platforms to wbauder@hamilton.edu and submit signatures to Will Bauder, Box 107 in the mail center.

Specific questions regarding your responsibilities if elected to office or the election procedures? Email Will at wbauder@hamilton.edu

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From Where I Sit: *My Gap Year In Slovakia*

By Katrina Rabeler '12
Features Writer

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATRINA RABELER '12

Katrina is an American student who took a gap year in Slovakia.

Hostel's gory torture and horror, *Eurotrip*'s green fairy absinthe and desolate commie buildings… and to think that after a five hour train ride I arrived in Bratislava, the setting for both these movies and the capital of Slovakia, I said "Dear sweet mother of God, I'm in *Western* Europe" contrary to Scotty's *Eastern* Europe as he arrives in Bratislava seeking Berlin. Slovakia certainly has not been cast as the enchanted European getaway in our American films. I, however, call this place home and could go on for hours about its enchanting nature, castles, people and how it was the perfect getaway for a gap year.

These past two months have been a whirlwind of tear-filled goodbyes, wet-eyed reunions, culture shock, and reverse culture shock. I traveled to nine countries, was forced to part indefinitely with the best friends I've ever had, felt ambushed by loud, emotional, and often obnoxious know-it-all Americans, and was left tongue tied each day as I relearned the English language. Three weeks later I was thrust into life on the hill at Hamilton; surprise: more culture shock.

I love Hamilton already, but I am also desperately homesick – and it is not for my birthplace of Oneonta, NY but rather a town called Spisska Nova Ves in eastern Slovakia where I spent the past year as a Rotary Youth exchange student. I am homesick for Slovaks constantly warning me that I will get sick if I go barefoot in the house or how my ovaries will freeze and I will not be able to have children if I sit on the floor and how they insist on locking doors so you cannot get in or out (my well-trained American mind always screamed FIRE HAZARD whenever I found myself locked in a building). I sorely miss feeling like a pirate 24-7 (the word for hello in Slovak is ahoj), getting kissed on both cheeks when I meet someone and teaching my classmates the art of roasting marshmallows (they customarily roast hard-core sausages). I miss being of legal age to drink, seeing the snow-capped High Tatra Mountains from my bedroom window, believing that Ježiško (baby Jesus) delivers the presents on Christmas instead of Santa, being able to hop on the train to go anywhere in Europe, wearing slippers to school, speaking in Slovak, and being surrounded by Europeans whose opinions on films such as Armageddon include, "It is typical American film: the world is about to end and then America saves everyone."

I was randomly assigned to attend a woodworking school in which I learned to saw, hammer, draw out furniture designs and many other things very useful to know before arriving at Hamilton. There was a separate building at my school where all the woodworking machinery was used; here, every Monday, I had PRAX in which my classmates and I sported cloth overalls and worked with saws, drills, and, of course, wood.

I predictably had my fair share of gruesome language mistakes such as telling my sister to have "erotic dreams" rather than "sweet dreams" or informing my classmates that my favorite thing to do on Friday nights in America was to "poop and talk around a campfire" instead of "sit and talk around a campfire." There were other cultural mistakes having nothing to do with the language, including getting overly excited about a cardboard Burgerking crown upon my reunion with fast-food and constantly insulting the driver by putting on my seatbelt everytime I got in the car. What I eventually realized was that as an exchange student you eventually lose your ability to be humiliated and allow the phrase, "I'm American" to excuse your abnormalities. I was recently forced to adopt, "I haven't lived in America for a year" to excuse my newfound abnormalities.

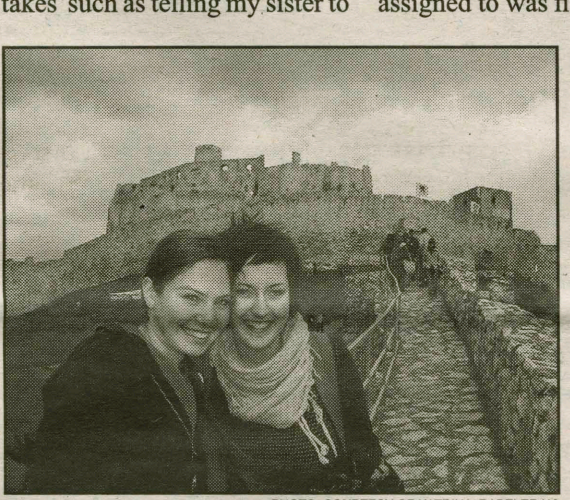

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATRINA RABELER '12

After her experience in Slovakia, Katrina is homesick for her Slovacks friends.

The greatest difficulty was striving to understand the negative attitude many Slovaks have towards the Roma people, an ethnic minority spread out all over Europe who are more commonly know of as gypsies. This attitude is comparable, though more intense, to many Americans' attitudes towards illegal Mexican immigrants or Indian reservations. Many Roma live in awful poverty and their "colonies" throughout Slovakia resemble that of a third world country. Most Slovaks I encountered looked down on the Roma and I was warned more than once never to talk to them because only 1/100 Roma is a decent, normal person; the rest are criminals.

I explored this issue throughout my year and discovered its origin in a long history of mistrust and misunderstanding. One of the lessons I had to learn was not to judge people too harshly for how they judge others. I became good friends with a self-proclaimed Nazi, I defied my host family and befriended some Roma children. The grand finale of my year occurred the last time I was in Slovakia; first all my Slovak friends surprised me at the train station to say goodbye. Directly following I had to take a 10-hour night train ride from my town to Prague in order to catch my flight home to America. The entire car I was assigned to was filled with adult Roma men. My Slovak friends could not believe I lived to tell the tale of how I spent my train ride learning the Romany language and explaining to these men that American is not a language and neither is Canadian - we all speak English.

I hope I did not make Slovakia out to be unappealing. Yes, I did live in communist style flats and ride graffiti-covered trains. Yes, I did drink absinthe and I even stayed in a sketchy hostel in Bratislava and I wasn't murdered. Slovakia is a beautiful country full of the kindest, funniest, most hospitable people I have ever met. I would recommend a gap year to anyone looking to add a bit of abnormality to their life. I didn't learn much at all in the realm of academics (though I can saw and hammer a sweet box) and am suffering for that now. I did, however, learn what it feels like to have to play charades every sentence, to be absolutely clueless much of the time, to be the only American around for miles and to feel the world shrinking as it became all the more connected with every misunderstanding explained and at every new friendship made.

"From Where I Sit" is the ESOL column that generally presents the nonnative English Speaker's point of view on his or her American experience. If you have a "From Where I Sit" story that you would like to share, please email adragan@hamilton.edu.

Spectator Under the Sheets:

When Plan A Does Not Work ...

By Annabelle Moore '12
Features Columnist

PHOTO BY CHRIS EATON '11

"Nothing is sexier than preparedness."

College life, I am coming to learn, is about new experiences. Teachers are now professors. Classes are only a semester. Beer pong is now Beirut. Sometimes these new experiences are thrilling, other experiences will look much more appealing in a dark, crowded dorm party than in the light of day. Whether it's the walk of shame or merely a hangover, some experiences are overshadowed by their very weighty repercussions. To save yourself from any painful experiences you need to know what Emergency Contraception is.

E.C. (also known as Plan B, or the morning after pill) should be taken if you had unprotected sex, your first method of contraception failed (i.e. the condom breaks) or you had sex against your will. Plan B should not be your only method of protection that you rely on, as it is not as effective as condoms or birth control pills and does not protect against STDs. Many people confuse E.C. with RU-486 also known as the Abortion Pill. E.C. prevents pregnancies, it does not terminate them, and if you are already pregnant it won't harm the fetus. The efficacy of Plan B decreases the longer you wait, so it is important to get it as soon as possible.

A lot of people on campus are under the impression that Plan B is "bad for you." This is not true. One of the ways Plan B prevents pregnancy is by "convincing your body" that you are already pregnant, as do regular birth control pills. Because of this, some people may experience some nausea, vomiting or breast soreness over the next one to two days. If you take Plan B with food you are also less likely to experience these side effects. It is also important to remember that one day of nausea is almost nothing compared to months of morning sickness, and the anxiety of an unintended pregnancy.

Plan B is available over-the- counter at the pharmacy if you are over 18, and at the Rudd Health Center on campus. I would recommend going to the Health Center, since you need to get it as soon as possible (before conception occurs), and it is much cheaper there ($25). Also, don't forget to ask about STD testing, which they provide. To get E.C., any female student of Hamilton should call and make an appointment Monday through Friday, regardless of age. If it is a Saturday or Sunday, a male or female student over 18 can get it over the counter from the local pharmacy without a prescription. The CVS in Clinton charges $49.59. If you are under 18 and you need it on a weekend, talk to an upperclassman you trust. Most R.A.'s would be happy to help you. Don't wait until Monday! Get it as soon as you can.

The pill can be taken up to five days after you have sex, but it is most effective when taken as soon as possible. So don't wait, even if it means braving the brutal winter winds with a killer hangover. You'll be glad you took the extra precaution. In the future, keep a condom nearby. Nothing is sexier than preparedness.

Annabelle Moore '12 has worked as a trained Peer Health Educator at NARAL New York for the past 2 years, and interned at Planned Parenthood and SIECUS. She is also in a long-distance relationship and would therefore love to live vicariously through you! Please e-mail her at acmoore@hamilton.edu with any questions, concerns or stories.

Calling all skiing, wine, local restaurant, sex, crossword, alternative life style, international, (insert hobby here) enthusiasts ...

Quirky? Witty? Interested in writing for Features? Email "The Dragon lady" and "Moon Beam" (adragan and lmoon)

2012 Opts Not To Wait for Senior Gift To Give Back

By Rebecca Pomerantz '12
Features Columnist

Serving the surrounding community has been a longstanding tradition on the Hill, but this year's Freshman Orientation brought a new face to the philanthropic community on campus. This year marks the inagural year of Hamilton Serves, a day within orientation during which all orientation groups are sent out to the surrounding areas to complete various acts of community service. Amy James, Director of Orientation and of the new Center for Community Outreach, led this initiative and was responsible for connecting with over 40 organizations that were served. Sites of service included churches, shelters, retirement/nursing homes, and parks.

The CCO, led by Dean of students James, Nancy Thompson, and College Chaplain Jeff McArn wanted to introduce something new into orientation that would allow the incoming students to discover the communities that surround Hamilton - giving them a chance to learn more about where they are, and opportunities lie beyond the hill. In origination, James' fundamental question was, "how can we expand the culture of service on campus?" James also saw this as a chance for the local people of Clinton and the surrounding areas "…to see how great Hamilton students really are."

No new initiative goes without its glitches, though. One of James's main concerns with Hamilton Serves was the process of making the day of service a mandatory event for all first years. The risk comes into play because in high school, many students had community service requirements, but when they get to college they tend not to continue on with volunteering opportunities. Despite concerns, the CCO wanted to break this pattern and show students that it can be both an enjoyable and rewarding activity.

James also noted that one of the big motivating factors for this program was the idea that "…anytime you look at someone else's life, it helps you to look at your own a little deeper, and in a different way."

Despite potential problems, the day was pulled off without any real glitches, resulting in "nearly 100 percent positive feedback." In general, the students seemed content with their work, the orientation leaders were very complimentary and James received many e-mails, letters and phone calls from the various agencies expressing their gratitude.

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Wenxi Li '10 volunteers with her orientation group.

When asked about the program, one first year, who volunteered at a church in Utica, said, "I think Utica and Clinton shows that we aren't isolating ourselves, and it gives incoming freshman, who may have never volunteered before, some insight into the volunteering opportunities here at Hamilton." It was a nice way to give students the chance to get off campus for the day, and many seemed to benefit from giving back to the community. Most students definitely got much more than a free T-shirt out of it. Yet, other people had different opinions. Other first year students believed the program was too long and it shouldn't have been a mandatory part of orientation. It can be hard to force people to do community service, as James recognized when organizing the program. "Community Service should not feel like a chore or a punishment," James said, but thought that it would be a creative way to help orientation groups bond, as well as make the opportunity more enjoyable.

As mentioned before, the Center for Community Outreach is new this year and is located on the third floor of the college chapel. It serves as the umbrella office for student service organizations, opportunities for service, and service related internships. One of the major organizations that fits under this "umbrella" is the Hamilton Action Volunteer Outreach Coalition (HAVOC), which is a completely student run organization and conducts several projects throughout the year that are open to the students.

With the new CCO and Hamilton Serves combined, 2008 is a big year for service on campus. In reference to Hamilton Serves, James explained that "the first year class were our guinea pigs and did a beautiful job." To top it off, she continues that she is "thrilled with the work they did. It's a good sign of success!"

Hamilton's Theatre Department Takes "Action"

By Nora Grenfell '12
Features Writer

If the recent production of "Action" is any indication, Hamilton personnel looking to expand their horizons, confront intellectual stimuli, or undergo an experience that might require serious hallucinogens to comprehend can look forward to future productions by the Theatre Department.

"Action," by Sam Shepherd, was presented Friday and Saturday at Minor theatre. The theatre is an attractive but diminutive building and seats were scarce by the time I arrived. Very few in attendance looked like first years, and the atmosphere was one of the most subdued I have yet encountered at Hamilton. I was alone, so I seated myself near the aisle and observed the "action" onstage: four people (none with shaven heads), seated at a table, with bored looks on their faces as they waited for the lights to go on. Once the lights flared up, though, it was anybody's guess as to where this play was going.

"Action" involves four characters reacting to one another's most basic impulses. Their reactions range from the mundane to the surreal, and the audience is at times forced to pause with the characters and re-examine the past few minutes or accept the absurdity and try to follow along for as long as the characters allow them. All of the actors (Chelsea D'Aprile '09, Sakhile Matlhare '10, Rouvan Mahmud '11, and James Greisler '10) did fantastic jobs retaining the attention of the audience as they launched in nonsensical monologues.

As I walked out of the theatre, I heard various responses to the play. Mostly, people just commented that they had not understood it. However, several people called the play one of the best they had ever seen. I am not a critic, I have limited experience with theatre, and this is one play whose appeal rests entirely on the individual observing it. I can say that I was confused, frustrated, and impressed multiple times throughout the play. But more important than my reaction is the unique choice the theatre department made in presenting this play.

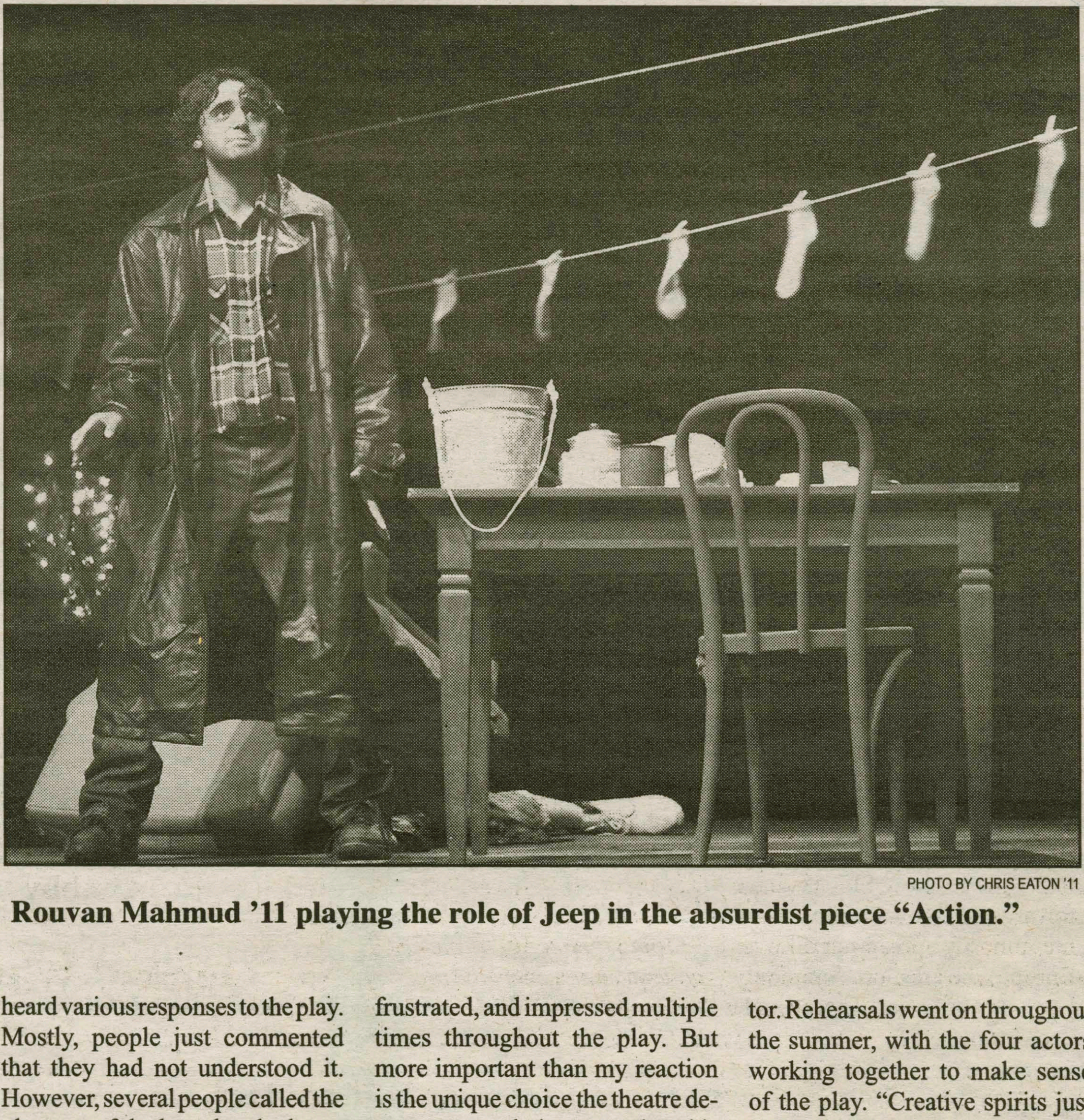


PHOTO BY CHRIS EATON '11

Rouvan Mahmud '11 playing the role of Jeep in the absurdist piece "Action."

I spoke to Rouvan Mahmud about his experience participating in the play. Hamilton's production of "Action" did not have a director. Rehearsals went on throughout the summer, with the four actors working together to make sense of the play. "Creative spirits just clicked," said Rouvan, when the four actors read the play aloud.

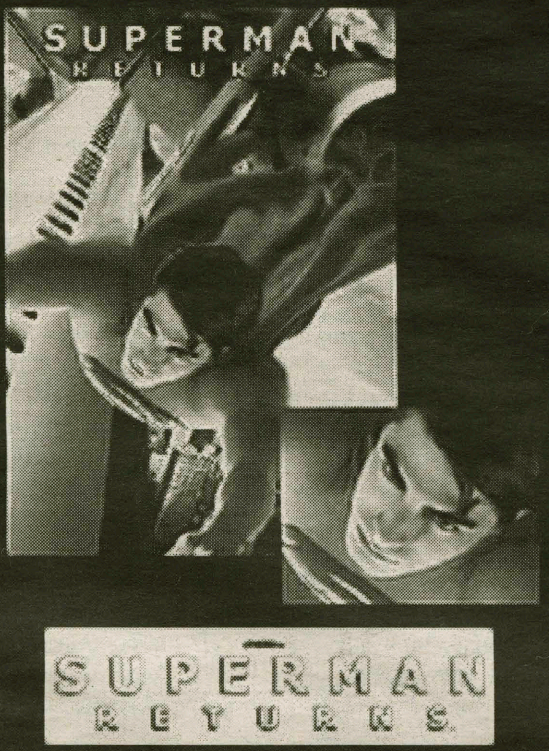
"We wanted to shake things up," said Rouvan, an attitude I felt was emblematic of the theatre department. There was hope that a Hamilton audience would be able to relate to the play. Rouvan said he hoped everyone who saw it "connected with some part of the play... if there was one moment where they could say, 'yeah, i know what that means.'"

The theatre department stresses that it strives to present a vide variety of plays, according to their FAQ leaflet. Upcoming is *Titus Andronicus* (by William Shakespeare), Saturday and Sunday at 2 P.M. Auditions for *Robert Zucco* were September 2 and 3 but keep an eye out for further e-mails about auditions. Anyone is welcome to audition for productions or get involved with production crew. Additionally, Untitled@Large is the campus' student theatre group. To get involved, email Untitled@hamilton.edu.

"You're very lucky if you've heard of five of the plays that [the theatre department's] done," said Rouvan. "They're more interesting. You never know what to expect. Last fall they did a play about the porn industry. Two of the girls onstage took their tops off. At Hamilton, you always need some sort of entertainment."

As for the mixed review of "Action," Rouvan said it was "kind of what I expected and kind of what I hoped. A mixed review is what life is like and what theatre should be like."

LEGENDARY
PICTURES



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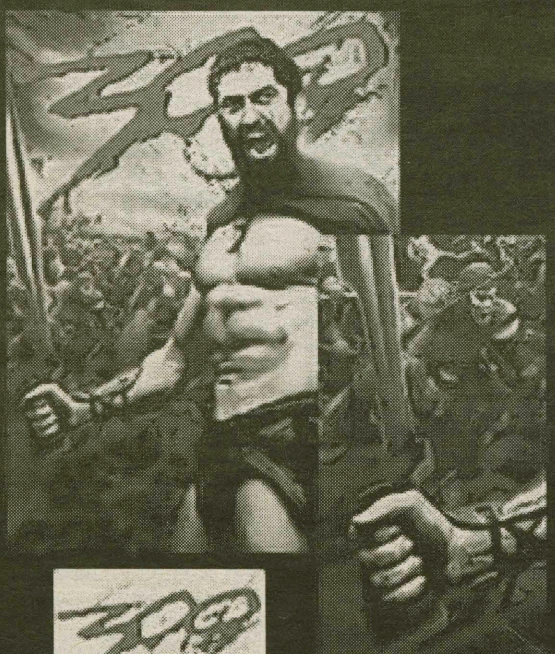

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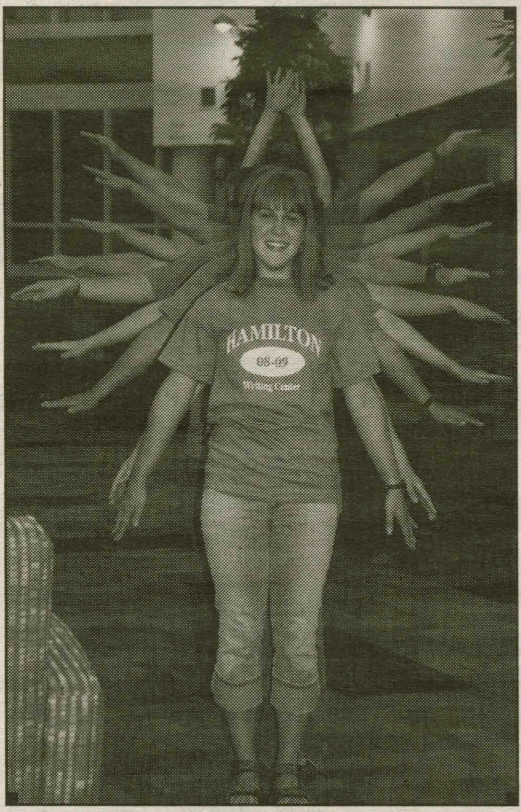

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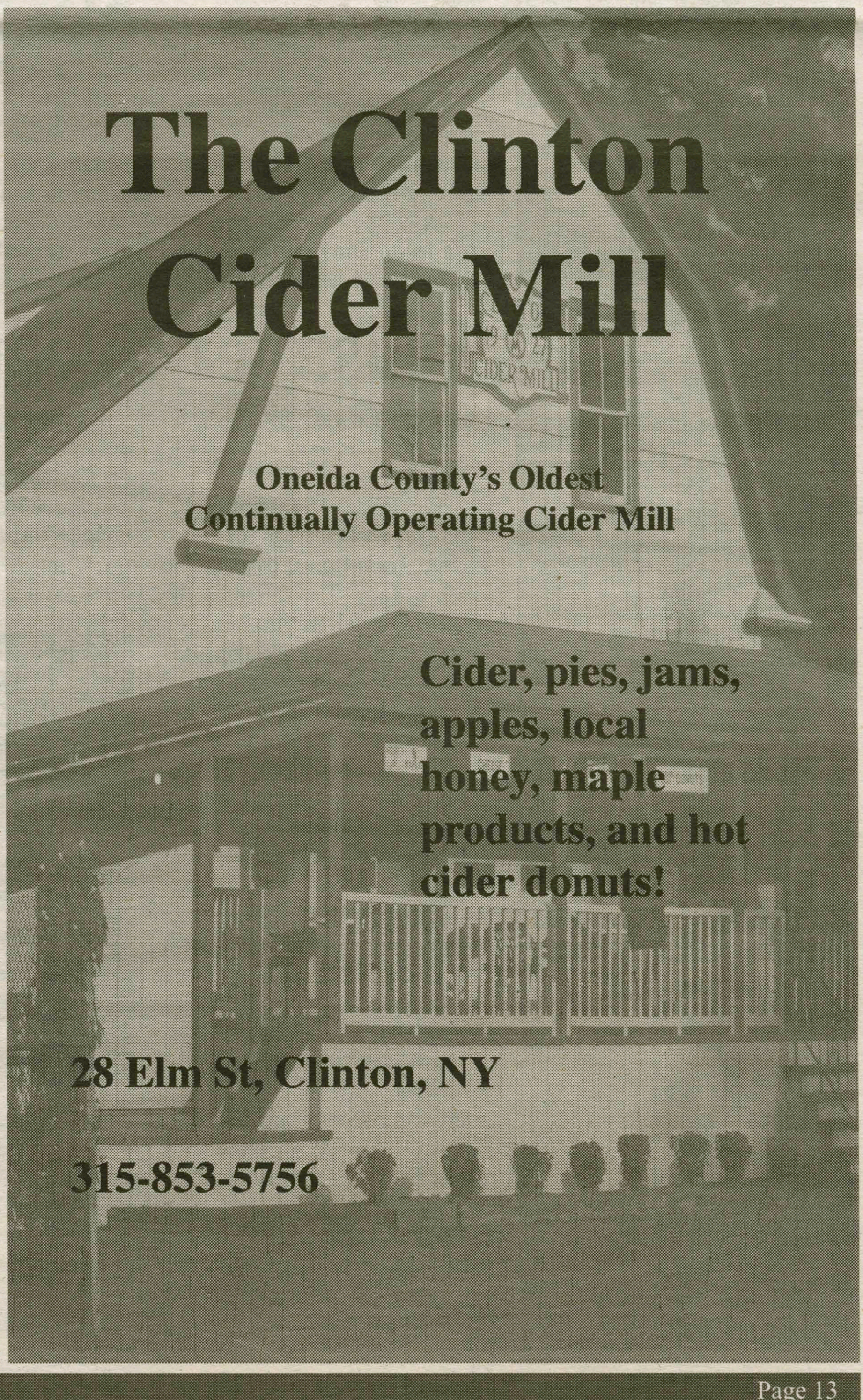

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Weekly Charts

by Jacob Murray '09
Arts & Entertainment Editor

MUSIC

(From iTunes)

Top Albums

1. The Recession - Young Jeezy
2. Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog (Soundtrack)
3. Hello Love - Chris Tomlin
4. Lost In The Sound Of Separation - Underoath
5. The Block - New Kids On The Block

Top Songs

1. So What - Pink
2. I'm Yours - Jason Mraz
3. Whatever You Like - T.I.
4. Disturbia - Rihanna
5. Paper Planes - MIA

MOVIES

(Yahoo! Movies)

1. Tropic Thunder
2. Babylon A.D.
3. The Dark Knight
4. The House Bunny
5. Traitor
6. Death Race
7. Disaster Movie
8. Mamma Mia!
9. Pineapple Express
10. Star Wars: The Clone Wars

BOOKS

(From The New York Times Best Seller List)

Paperback Fiction

1. THE SHACK, by William P. Young
2. THE SECRET LIFE OF BEES, by Sue Monk Kidd
3. THE CHOKE, by Nicholas Sparks
4. BAREFOOT, by Elin Hilderbrand
5. THE KITE RUNNER, by Khaled Hosseini

Paperback Non-Fiction

1. THREE CUPS OF TEA, by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin
2. A LONG WAY GONE, by Ishmael Beah
3. EAT, PRAY, LOVE, by Elizabeth Gilbert
4. THE GIFT OF FEAR, by Gavin de Becker
5. THE GLASS CASTLE, by Jeannette Walls

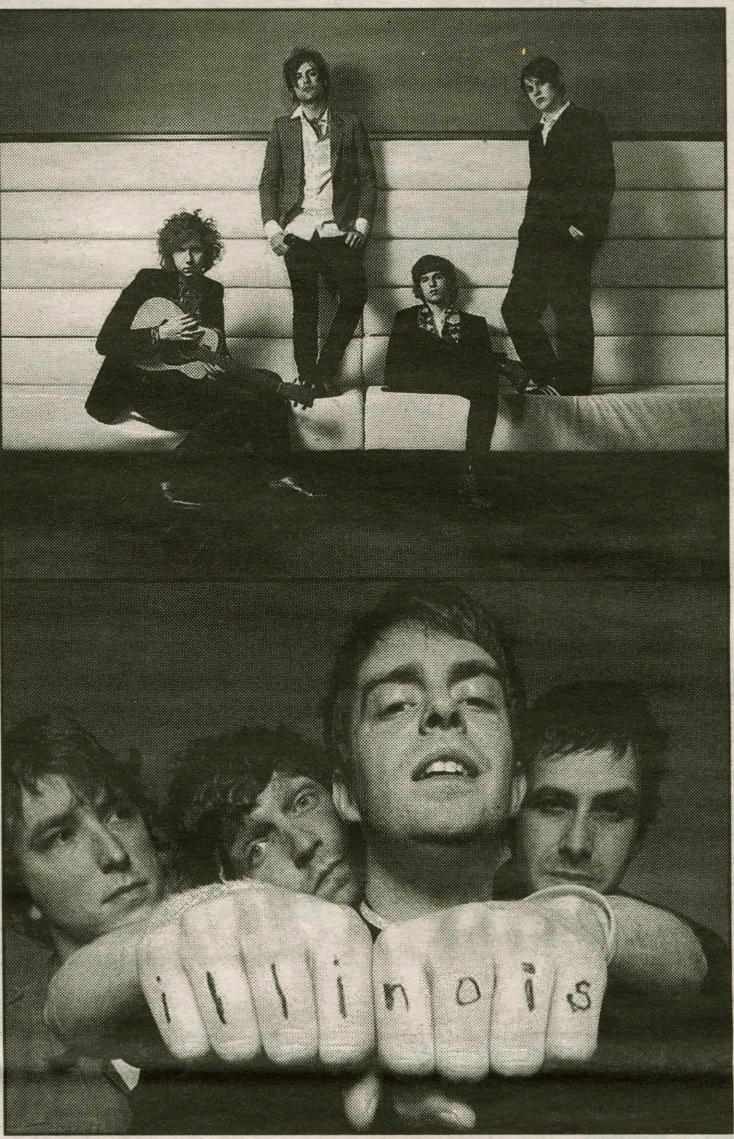
CAB Presents The Kooks & Illinois!

by Jennifer Vano '09
Arts & Entertainment Editor

The Kooks, a British phenomenon that made it big with their 2006 Astralwerks release Inside In/Inside Out, invaded Hamilton's campus yesterday as the headliner of the college's first large-scale concert of the semester. Clad in oh-so-wonderfully-British tight jeans, singer/guitarist Luke delivers rich and soulful vocals that bring his and drummer Paul Garred's lyrics about love, heartbreak, and the woes of being a rock star to life. Complete with lead guitarist Hugh Harris and bassist Max Rafferty, The Kooks deliver records that are versatile, that tap into both the energized and quiet parts of their fans' lives, that are so thoughtful and rich that they take on a life separate from that of the listener. It is no wonder that they have been compared to The Kinks, Coldplay, and Oasis, consistently selling out shows all over the world, and have even had the honor of opening for The Rolling Stones.

But what is it about The Kooks and their music--particularly this new album Konk-- that is so great? For one, the Kooks bleed with passion. They admit to getting a "buzz" off an audience, feeding off the phenomenon that is music: great musicians, great concerts bring people from every walk of life together despite political, social, economic, racial, gender, or religious dissidence. There's nothing like it.

And then there's their instrumentals: powerful guitar and catchy drumbeats and bass-lines coupled with those brilliantly contagious hooks evidence The Kook's understanding of what makes pop and indie rock music worthwhile and timeless. This is music that makes you want to jump up and down, sing along, and butcher its riffs on your acoustic guitar, but its texture, its components are still so real: strip these guys of fancy recording equipment and venues, leave them only with themselves and those instruments—and their almost tangible love for the music—and they're still good, there's no denying.



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Hamilton is the only college stop on The Kooks tour!

Theres's also no denying that The Kooks worked on Konk with an amazingly talented producer, the famous Tony Hoffer, who has worked with Beck, Air, and The Fratellis. Luke explains that yes, Tony is a musical genius, but that the pairing seemed completely natural and resulted in undeniably "fun" recording sessions. This comes as no surprise. Konk feels organic: there's no tension between overly-emotional lyrics and heavy-handed instrumentals, for example, there is no force: everything just comes together as if it had been born complete and breathing from nothing, yet when you study it you know that it required hours of labor to birth: brilliant.

Even without the help of the genius Tony, The Kooks are intriguing because they are fresh and young: Luke is only 22. They know how to "give people a great night out"; the "point" of music, say Luke and Hugh, is to make people "feel good" and "change [them] in some way." The Kooks are true to their word: watching them, you feel pulled into their no-holds- bar, we've-got-nothing-to-lose almost-mania: you are high off their high, and you're energized not only by how bloody talented they are but also by simply trying to wrap your head around the facts: so successful and young. And, despite being signed to a major label—an always seemingly imminent threat to an artist's vision—the band has established and maintained its identity as a musical force. It's too much to think about.

For more information about The Kooks visit www.thekooks.co.uk or myspace.com/thekooks.

Yeasayer to come to Hamilton next week!

by Tom Lewek '09
Arts & Entertainment Writer

On Friday, September 12, Yeasayer will perform for a captivated Hamilton crowd in the Events Barn. The event is the result of collaboration between WHCL (Hamilton College Radio) and the Independent Music Fund to bring the Brooklyn band to Clinton, NY for a night of musical enjoyment and entertainment. The band's appearance at Hamilton will be a one-off event, and a show that falls between the conclusion of a European tour and a series of forthcoming dates in Australia, the United States, and Canada. While in Europe, the band supported Beck on his Modern Guilt tour. Joining Yeasayer will be Ball of Flame Shoot Fire, a jazz-influenced indie rock band from Pittsburgh that has previously opened for Mates of State, Grizzly Bear, Man Man, and the Spinto Band. They have played mainly in and around Pittsburgh but have also done shows in New York City and at Hamilton, and their songs have been played on BBC radio.

Formed in 2006, Yeasayer defines its sound as both "Middle Eastern-psych-snap-gospel" and the more ironic "Enya with bounce." Although both descriptions may seem comical, there does exist an underlying sense of the transcendent in the band's sound. Certainly, in a song such as "2080," the sprawling soundscapes evoke the eerie and mystic qualities found so often in religious music. To accomplish this style, the band draws from a myriad of sources, employing sitars, synths, bongos, and harmonized choir vocals. They draw on everything from African percussion to Middle Eastern tribal sounds, to the harmonic vocal styles of the Beach Boys. Yet, the band never crosses the threshold into cacophony or incoherence.

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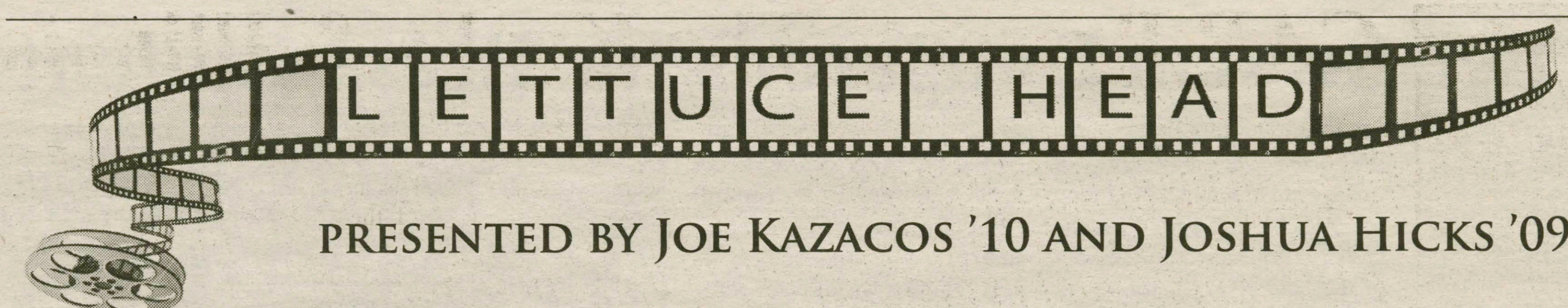
Yeasayer will perform at Hamilton on September 12.

Yeasayer's music remains fundamentally beautiful while their warning of imminent decline (in politics, in culture, in the natural world) remains focused and developed. Accordingly, the band has become a bright light in the all too crowded world of Brooklyn indie rock.

Beginning with a performance at the SXSW in Texas in 2007, the band has steadily gained critical and increasingly popular recognition. They have performed on Late Night with Conan O'Brien and, as mentioned before, they have supported such established artists as Beck. For further listening, check out the band's debut album All Cymbals Sound or view their performance at a Parisian house party on La Blogotheque.

WHCL and the Independent Music, in conjunction with Late Nite, are honored to present Yeasayer with Ball of Flame Shoot Fire on Friday, September 12th at 9 p.m. in the Events Barn. The event is free with a Hamilton ID. Stay tuned throughout the semester for more WHCL and IMF events on campus or contact either organization via e-mail (whcl@hamilton.edu and imf@hamilton.edu).



PRESENTED BY JOE KAZACOS '10 AND JOSHUA HICKS '09

RENO 911!

A squad of inept police officers find themselves the only operational force in the streets of Miami. The team from Comedy Central's original TV show-Reno 911!-leave"the biggest little city in the world" to try and keep the streets of Miami under control. An intellectual comedy this is not. Satirizing the filming style of the show "COPS", Reno 911! has no concrete plot; rather, the show is made up of a string of hilarious encounters between the cast and the colorful citizens (and animals) of Miami. Guest stars include Danny DeVito and The Rock. Although this movie isn't going to win any Oscars in the near future, it definitely has its moments, earning it a 3.6 lettuce heads. Look for Reno 911! Miami on the September movie channel.

BATMAN

After the untimely death of the talented and handsome, Heath Ledger, many asked themselves, "What does fate have in store for Hollywood?" I've asked myself this many times now that Indiana Jones has tradied his whip for a cane, Julia Roberts has so many teeth she can't deliver her lines, and between Russel Crowe and Mel Gibson, the demand for anger management specialists is clearly on the rise. No offense to Legendary Pictures, but wasn't the classic Jack Nicholson just as effective a "Joker" as our late one? The anarchic themes play out in both films, but the Joke of the previous *Batman* (1989) seemed to be playful, whereas the Joke of the new film is played as a "freak" and a mad-man. If I am the geezer representative for the '80s then let it be so, but I warn you not to put all your movie eggs in one cinematic basket. Michael Keaton plays just as rich a Bruce Wayne as anyone, and Jack Nicholson plays such a terrific villain that his name shows up on the bill before Keaton's. Go figure! If you think the older *Batman* is a worthless blast from the past, think again. At least you won't want to give the cape crusader a cough drop. 5/5!

CHILDREN OF MEN

The women of earth have been infertile since 2009. By 2027, that means the oldest man is 18 years old, chaos has ravaged the world's superpowers, and there is no hope for the human race. Theo, played by Clive Owen, shares this bleak outlook for the future of his home in London. The story quickly takes a turn when Theo, a seemingly apathetic alcoholic, is thrust into circumstances which could change the 18 year dearth. Originally written by author P. D. James, Children of Men has suspense behind every broken window and action behind every bullet. It gets 4.7 lettuce heads. Look for it on the September movie channel.

GLADIATOR

Nearly forty years passed without a single Hollywood Roman Epic before *Gladiator* was released in the 2000. Why the long stretch? Casey Green '09 told me she thinks *Gladiator* is the best of all ancient Roman epics because of its cinematography and CGI effects. Yet Americans had been in love with ancient Rome long before *Gladiator* debuted. In fact, classics professor Carl Rubino remembers how movie-goers dressed up to come to see *Ben-Hur* (1959) and the sounds of long overtures made the whole event a classy spectacle (not to mention the constant casting of "high class" British actors). The massive march of the Roman army in *Spartacus* (1960) is unforgettable, especially becuase no special effects were added! And the classic chariot race in *Ben-Hur* takes you off the edge of your seat, and contains no soundtrack as the pounding hooves of horses is all you need to keep your heart racing. Chris Bouton '09 marked that all three films deal with the tyranny and potential fall of Rome, and perhaps while we admire the greatness of Rome we can think of our own "empire" today. Is *Girls Gone Wild* the new Roman orgy? Has Nascar replaced the great Circus? Check out *Ben-Hur* and *Spartacus* and see which side of the empire you fall on. We clearly can't get enough of those togas. 5/5!

Hamilton Horoscopes

by Steve Allinger '09
STAFF SEER

Aries: Long term relationships need constant infusions of excitement... so don't get mad at me for suggesting anal sex when all I'm trying to do is save the relationship.

Taurus: You are too headstrong and forceful with your friends, try being passive aggressive for a change.

Gemini: Confidence is an issue for you. Try changing your physical appearance so that it won't be.

Cancer: An unusually bitchy mood is going to settle over you for a fortnight. Maybe it's time to pamper yourself with a visit to the spa for a luxurious vagina de-sanding.

Leo: One day, everything the light touches will be yours... except that elephant graveyard over near the womyn's center.

Virgo: Seriously, what the hell is a Virgo?

Libra: Your symbol is the scale, but don't worry, many lame people go on to live somewhat fulfilling lives.

Scorpio: Saturn is aligning itself with Venus which can only mean one thing... Daquiris!

Sagittarius: An old flame is rekindled deep in your loins... see doctor immediately.

Capricorn: Remember, a stitch in time saves nine, but nobody knows what that means, so you should probably just make sure that your classes don't interfere with your drinking this semester.

Aquarius: Something will disrupt your flow... I'm tired of writing these.

Pisces: It's time to step out of the shadow of your more successful friends by brutally murdering them.

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NICOLAS CAGE STADIUM SEATING R
THE LONGSHOTS ICE CUBE 5:00 PG
DEATH RACE JASON STATHAM STADIUM SEATING
●1:05●3:20-5:35-7:50▲10:00 DTS R
BABYLON A.D. VIN DIESEL
●1:15●3:15-5:25-7:30▲9:35 DTS PG-13
COLLEGE ●1:55●4:00-6:05-8:10▲10:10 R
DISASTER MOVIE
●1:00●3:00-5:05-7:10▲9:15 PG-13
THE HOUSE BUNNY ANNA FARIS
●1:20●3:25-5:30-7:40▲9:50 PG-13
TRAITOR ●2:20-4:45-7:00▲9:25 PG-13
TROPIC THUNDER #1 MOVIE 3RD WEEK IN ROW!
●1:10●3:30-5:45-8:00▲10:15 DTS R
THE DARK KNIGHT ●2:00-7:20 PG-13
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ELS Bee Swarm Dangerous for Bees, Students

by Jessica Carroll '12
Science & Technology Writer

Bees. Many people fear them for their sting while others love them for their honey. They are an essential part of our ecosystem, as The Bee Movie so dramatically illustrates though it is an animated story. Bees, unfortunately, do not really wear sweaters or speak English. But they do swarm.

Most recently, on August 27, a horticultural crew was working across the street from ELS. Just before the workers were scheduled to break for lunch, they noticed an active swarm of bees in front of the building. The estimated size of the swarm was around twenty thousand bees all flying together in a clump. This particular colony of bees has swarmed before in previous years but usually in the spring.

An old adage about bee swarms goes: "A swarm of bees in May is worth a load of hay; a swarm of bees in June is worth a silver spoon; a swarm of bees in July isn't worth a fly." bees usually swarm in the early summer, since that is when the majority of flowers are blooming, providing more nectar and pollen for the construction and nourishment of the new hive. Therefore, an August bee swarm is less than worthless. Just don't tell the bees.

However, while the worth of the bee swarm is unclear, it is still inadvisable to interrupt the bees while they are swarming. Many people are allergic to bees; their airways close up when they are stung, and they are unable to breathe until emergency care is given. Even for those people who are not allergic, bee stings still really hurt.

What many people fail to realize, however, is that stinging is a bee's last resort. Bees' stingers are attached to their vital organs, which they leave behind after stinging. Understandably, bees die soon after stinging. Bees will usually only sting to defend their nest for if the nest is breached, then countless other bees will die as well. A bee would rather sacrifice itself than have the rest of the hive killed.

But bees in a swarm do not have a home. Even though "20,000 bees flying together [make] a big impression!" as Terry Hawkridge, director of the National Arboretum, notes, bees are actually less likely to sting in a swarm. This is because they do not have a hive of their own to protect; in fact, their current mission is to find a new one and not to defend the old. This does not mean, however, that the bees will never sting while swarming. They still have a queen to defend, and will do so at the cost of their own lives.

A swarm forms when the bees have run out of room in the hive. The queen realizes the space constraint and then lays eggs in queen cells, where the larvae are fed royal jelly instead of honey in order to produce new, virgin queens. Right before the queens are about to hatch, the old queen flies out of the nest, taking a large chunk of the worker population with her. They all alight within a few meters of the hive and wait while scouts go up to half a mile off to find a new nesting spot. There is, however, much risk involved. The bees only have the nectar and honey that they carry with them, and if a new spot is not found soon, then they will starve.

While these swarms can be disruptive, they are not destructive. An informal sampling of Hamilton students showed that while most were not explicitly afraid of bees, almost all of them preferred to keep their distance. The swarm could therefore have caused a problem if it had happened while students were going to classes in ELS. Luckily, upon close inspection, crews were unable to find any significant damage to the structure.

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Bee swarms, like the one shown, are natural processes.

Hamilton Students, Faculty Feel Connections to Gustav

by Elijah LaChance '10
Science & Technology Editor

After rampaging through Cuba over the weekend, Hurricane Gustav gained Category 5 status over the Gulf of Mexico and slammed into Louisiana, west of New Orleans, late Monday. The town of Houma was directly in its path. On Wednesday, billboards, automobiles, and huge trees littered the streets of the town square, intermingling with ruined buildings in a graphic spectacle of nature's violence.

Meanwhile, in New Orleans, evacuees were allowed back in the city Wednesday, as Mayor Ray Nagin reversed a previous announcement that the city would be off-limits until Thursday. Tens of thousands of residents had gathered around the city, many without money or gasoline, for almost twenty-four hours before the decision was reversed.

Trees were down in New Orleans, too, and several buildings were destroyed, but overall officials declared the local and national responses to the latest hurricane to lambast the region a comparative success. The New Orleans levies, overwhelmed during Hurricane Katrina and since repaired by the Army Corps of Engineers, faced their first real test Monday, and they worked. Moderate street flooding – no more than six inches – was the most significant water damage reported in the city. Only ten fatalities were reported, as opposed to over 2,600 from Katrina.

Gustav, like other hurricanes, got off to a modest start before ravaging the Gulf Coast. Eugene Domack, J. W. Johnson Family Professor of Environmental Studies, says that hurricanes begin when water molecules from the ocean's surface gain enough energy to move into the air. Ocean currents collide to give the new storm system a hurricane's characteristic spin.

Hurricanes continue gaining strength as they feed on warm ocean water in the Mid-Atlantic. The result is stupendous. Domack says, "The biggest difference between a hurricane

*see **Gustav's**, page 18*

WWW.REUTERS.COM

Wind from Hurricane Gustav damaged many buildings.

Diabetes Research Makes Huge Leap

by Saad Chaudhry '12
Science & Technology Writer

Scientists call it various names, from "biological alchemy," to "direct reprogramming," to simply "gene therapy," but essentially the process that is offering hope to millions of diabetics across the world is the conversion of pancreatic cells to insulin-producing cells.

Much furious debate has raged in the realms of science, politics, and philosophy as to the ethical appropriateness of research on embryonic stem cells: cells that have the potential for conversion to one of more than 200 other types of cells for the treatment of virtually all diseases, ranging from diabetes to heart disease to ALS. However, scientists have begun to bypass this controversial debate through a new method of injecting the genetic cocktail of one type of cell into another without the use of embryos or cloning. Instead, some genetic researchers have used genetic engineering and molecular biology to obtain artificial embryonic-like stem cells.

On August 27, Professor Doug Melton, co-director of the Harvard Stem Cell Institute and researcher for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and Dr Qiao "Joe" Zhou published a paper in *Nature* in which they reported to have successfully converted exocrine pancreatic cells into rare insulin-producing beta cells in mice — animals which were used due to their high genetic similarity to humans. Such beta cells represent a mere one percent of all pancreatic cells and are the first to die off in patients with diabetes.

"We were able to flip the cell from one state into another," Melton stated, adding that the use of such a medical mechanism will prove useful in "any case where there's a cell type missing and there are neighboring cells that are still healthy." For instance, the conversion of cells through the injection of external genetic material may prove useful for increasing neurons in victims of certain neurological disorders where motor skills are diminished, such as for those diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's Disease), or for increasing cardiac muscle cells in victims of heart attacks.

This mechanism of cell conversion relies on the scientific principle that all cells have complete information about the genes in their DNA. These genes can be turned on and off in order to induce different states of function within a cell; the reason for such a capability is still mysterious to scientists. In recent years, scientists have been working at turning on certain originally inactive genes in adult cells to induce them into an embryonic state since

*see **Stem cell**, page 17*

Large Hadron Collider Draws Praise and Protests

by Raul Petrascu '12
Science & Technology Writer

The European Organization for Nuclear Research, also known as CERN, will push the start button on the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) on Monday, September 10.

A particle collider is a device that accelerates electrically charged atomic particles to extremely high speeds using a very strong electric field. The Large Hadron Collider will produce particles seven times more energetically rich than the next most powerful accelerator, the American Tevatron, located at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory in Batavia, Illinois. The LHC will be the largest and most powerful of its kind once it is inaugurated, and will be put to use once the final part of its cooling process is finished.

The device is buried, according to CNN News, approximately 280 feet below the French-Swiss Alps and will hopefully help uncover the secrets of the Big Bang. The cost of this project exceeded $8 billion and ten years of construction, but it will pay off as the immense colliding speeds of the particles captured within will create temperatures up to three billion degrees Centigrade, recreating the condition of the universe immediately after Big Bang.

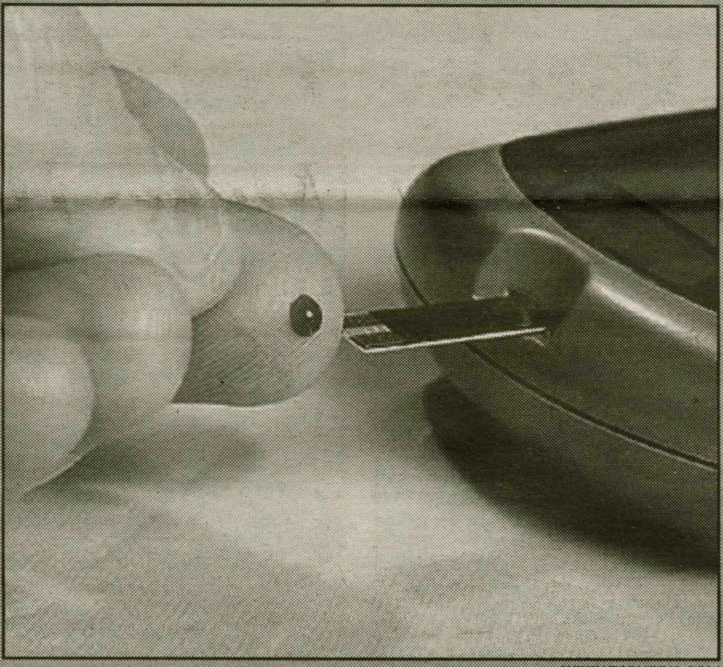
During the events, atomic particles will move along a series of rings aligned with very strong magnets. The magnets will accelerate the particles to speeds close to the speed of light. This breakthrough was made possible by cooling the magnets to a temperature of -271.25 degrees Centigrade, giving them super-conducting properties. Each particle will move at a rate of 11.245 laps per second along the 16.8 mile-long circle-shaped tunnel before colliding with another super-conducted particle. The temperatures generated by these collisions will be a hundred thousand times hotter than the core of the Sun. The head scientists at CERN believe that these should be sufficiently high to yield replicas of the first particles that resulted immediately after the birth of the Universe.

With the help of the Large Hadron Collider, scientists hope to discover a number of sub-

*see **LHC**, page 18*

Stem Cell Debate Sidestepped

*from **Diabetes**, page 16*



WWW.TOPNEWS.COM

Pioneering stem cell treatments could lead to breakthroughs in the treatment of diabetes and other diseases.

embryonic cells are easier for conversion than adult cells; therefore, work with adult stem cells was excessively tedious in the opinion of some researchers, and Melton went in search for a more direct method of cell conversion.

"We just asked, sort of like an undergraduate, the simple question, 'Why should you have to go all the way back to the beginning? Could you go directly from one cell type to another?'" said Melton.

Melton chose to apply direct reprogramming to the case of diabetes since his own children, Sam and later Emma, were diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. Melton obviously has a deep personal connection to diabetes, explaining in a nationally-broadcasted interview, "When my son Sam was diagnosed, I did what any parent would do: I asked myself, 'What can I do?'"

Melton and his team at Harvard first identified nine critical genes in mature beta cells responsible for creating insulin. Next, they determined the proteins that can be used to turn these genes on in pancreatic cells that do not produce insulin: Ngn3, Pdx1 and Mafa. Finally, they used a virus that tracks such pancreatic cells to transport these proteins to the desired cells.

Only ten days after the injection of the virus, approximately 20 percent of the exocrine cells took on the unique spindle shape of beta cells, and they also started producing insulin at levels satisfyingly similar to those of natural beta cells.

Melton and his team tested this direct reprogramming mechanism by destroying beta cells in dozens of mice in order to simulate diabetes, and then supplying the mice with the three proteins. The mice treated with the proteins displayed healthy glucose levels whereas the mice that were given a placebo displayed levels expected from diabetics.

Even more astonishing, the results from the test showed that direct reprogramming is not only faster than the stem cell alternative, but it is also significantly more effective in adjusting glucose levels, and it is also a safer option. "The transformation should also be safer than methods involving immature stem cells, which have a tendency to grow into tumors," said Konrad Hochedlinger, a researcher at the Harvard Stem Cell Institute who did not participate in this research project.

Nonetheless, direct reprogramming is not off the hook with respect to controversial debates just yet. While it is true this mechanism of cell alteration avoids the chaotic embryonic stem cell debate, injecting humans with viruses is currently against FDA guidelines. Still, scientists such as Professor Melton are confident that in a few years time these guidelines will be altered due to the very safe and controlled use of the virus as an effective transporting agent for the proteins.

Melton, along with others in the scientific community, projects a time frame of approximately two to five years wait until this revolutionary medical breakthrough will be implemented on humans. Until then, many scholars in academia agree that this far more effective alternative for cell alteration stimulates a much needed reprieve from the stress brought upon by the heated, and perhaps superfluous, incessant embryonic stem cell debate.

Did You Know That?

Wacky Science Facts

by Elijah LaChance '10
Science & Technology Editor

- ***The blue whale can produce sounds up to 188 decibels. This is the loudest sound produced by a living animal and has been detected as far away as 530 miles.***

- ***The largest man-made lake in the U.S. is Lake Mead, created by Hoover Dam.***

- ***The poison arrow frogs of South and Central America are the most poisonous animals in the world.***

- ***There are no poisonous snakes in Maine.***

- ***A newborn blue whale measures 20-26 feet long and weighs up to 6,614 pounds.***

- ***The first coast-to-coast telephone line was established in 1914.***

- ***The largest telescope in the world is currently being constructed in northern Chile. The telescope will utilize four 26 ft. 8 in. mirrors, which will gather as much light as a single 52 ft. 6 in. mirror.***

- ***The Virginia opossum has a gestation period of only 12-13 days.***

- ***The Stegosaurus measured up to 30 feet long, but it had a brain the size of a walnut.***

- ***The largest meteorite crater in the world is in Winslow, Arizona. It is 4,150 feet across and 150 feet deep.***

- ***The human eye blinks an average of 4.2 million times a year.***

- ***Skylab, the first American space station, fell to the earth in thousands of pieces in 1979. Thankfully, most of them fell over the ocean.***

- ***Human jaws can generate a force of 200 pounds on the molars.***

- ***The Skylab astronauts grew 1.5 - 2.25 inches due to spinal lengthening and straightening as a result of zero gravity.***

- ***An inch of rainwater is equivalent to 15 inches of dry, powdery snow in terms of water content.***

- ***Tremendous erosion at the base of Niagara Falls undermines the shale cliffs and as a result the falls have receded approximately seven miles over the last 10,000 years.***

- ***40 to 50 percent of body heat can be lost through the head as a result of its extensive circulatory network.***

- ***A large swarm of desert locusts (Schistocerca gregaria) can consume 20,000 tons of vegetation.***

- ***The longest-living cells in the body are brain cells which can live an entire lifetime. The largest flying animal was the pterosaur, which lived 70 million years ago. This reptile had a wing span of 36-39 feet and weighed 190-250 pounds.***

- ***The Hubble Space Telescope weighs twelve tons is 43 feet long, and cost $2.1 billion to originally build.***

Gustav's Damage Continues After Rains and Wind Stop

*from **Diabetes**, page 16*

and the storms we see here in central New York is one of scale. Storms here are mainly local weather systems; a hurricane can stretch over several states."

Domack has personal experience with hurricanes. He rode out Hurricane Alicia, a Category 3 hurricane that landed in Texas in 1983, causing 21 fatalities. Domack says wind came from every direction, tearing bricks off the house where he was staying. "The winds and rain lasted about half a day; then everything was over. Trees were down; there was water everywhere; birds were singing. Then the other half of the storm hit and it was bad all over again." The eye of the hurricane had passed directly over Domack's house.

The Gulf Coast has a history of dealing with huge tropical storm fronts, so much so that they have become part of the region's culture. A popular Gulf Coast cocktail, made with grenadine, orange and pineapple juices, and Meyer's rum, is known as a Hurricane. Nevertheless, New Orleans was completely evacuated Sunday as officials responded to the increased fear of these monster storms following Katrina's wrath.

Casey Green '09, a New Orleans native, explained how Hurricane Katrina changed the way many local residents viewed the storms. "Growing up old residents of the city would tell me where they were for Betsy and Camille, two big hurricanes that hit in the 1960s. Prior to Katrina old residents would use those storms as an excuse for not evacuating. On the news, people would say 'I survived Betsy, I will survive this one.'" Hurricane Katrina, Green said, "brought a sense of reality to people."

With Hurricanes Hanna, Ike, and Josephine still out at sea, many people wonder how many more storms are on the way this year and in the future, in part due to the ongoing reality of global climate change. Prof. Domack responds that while there will probably not be an increase in the number of storms – hurricane season only lasts so long – the storms themselves will become more intense. "As the oceans warm, hurricanes will have more energy to draw on," he explains.

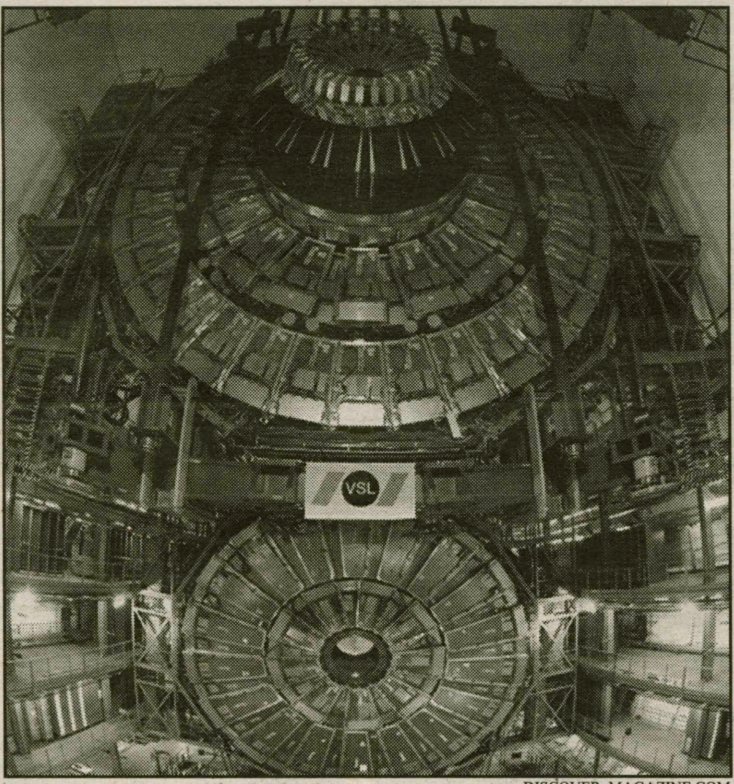
As millions of people along the Gulf Coast return to their homes, however, questions about future storms are pushed temporarily aside. More destructively present are thoughts of what they'll find when they return. Green said, "Nothing that I have experienced up here compares to the fear you feel when you have to evacuate. There is a sense that you do not know anything. You don't know what the storm will do; you don't know how long you will be away; and you don't know what you will find when you come back."

LHC is Controversial, but Slated to Move Forward

*from **Large Hadron**, page 17*

ic marvels. The Higgs boson is one of these – a highly disputed element whose existence has not yet been proved and which is, if it exists, a massive elementary particle. Scientists also want to use the LHC to study "supersymmetry," a concept which states that visible matter constitutes only four percent of the living environment, and that the rest is made out of dark matter and dark energy – unperceivable by human senses. Another interesting topic located on the CERN checklist is the study of matter and antimatter. The high-speed collisions will give rise to antimatter, which is essentially constituted of normal fundamental particles (such as protons and electrons) but with the charges reversed. That is, negatively charged protons – called antiprotons - and positively charged electrons – called positrons.

Despite its potential usefulness, the Large Hadron Collider has opponents as well as fans. A group of protesters from Hawaii have filed a legal suit against the scientists at CERN, and have petitioned for the halt of experimentation. They claimed that the Large Hadron Collider could generate a black hole that would consume the Earth, according to the BBC.



DISCOVER_MAGAZINE.COM

The Large Hadron Collider, shown, has over 16 miles of tubing and crosses between France and Switzerland.

The protesters, however, lost the suit as numerous scientists explained various safety measures that clearly proved the LHC could not in fact generate a black hole.

Frank Close, a physics specialist at the University of Oxford declared: "The Large Hadron Collider is like a time machine. It will take us far back to the period of the Big Bang by recreating the conditions which existed then. We will thus observe new types of particles which we could not notice in any other conditions."

The launch of this already famous collider will progress in stages, as the device harnesses immense energy, up to ten gigajoules (the equivalent of 2.4 tons of TNT). The enthusiastically-awaited inauguration can be seen live online at *http://webcast.cern.ch* on September 10.

SCI & TECH EVENTS CALENDAR

TUESDAY, SEPT. 9:

Sustainability and Environmental Justice Panel, presented by the Diversity and Social Justice Project

Panelists include Professors Erol Balkan, Joyce Barry, Peter Cannavo, and Ernest Williams

4:10 p.m - 5:30 p.m.

KJ Auditorium

TUESDAY, SEPT. 9:

HEAG (Hamilton Environmental Action Group) Meeting

7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Glen House

THURSDAY, SEPT. 11:

Professor Anthony Aveni

Colgate University

"Scientific Astronomy in Hesiod? The Roots of Prehistoric Stargazing"

Classics Deptartment Winslow Lecture

4:10 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

SCCT G027

Scientists, therefore, are responsible for their research, not only intellectually but also morally. This responsibility has become an important issue in many of today's sciences, but especially so in physics, in which the results of quantum mechanics and relativity theory have opened up two very different paths for physicists to pursue. They may lead us - to put it in extreme terms - to the Buddha or to the Bomb, and it is up to each of us to decide which path to take.

~Fritjof Capra

Hamilton Exiles Begin Season With Lafayette

New Training Program Sets Foundation for the Future

by Nico Kernan '10
Sports Writer

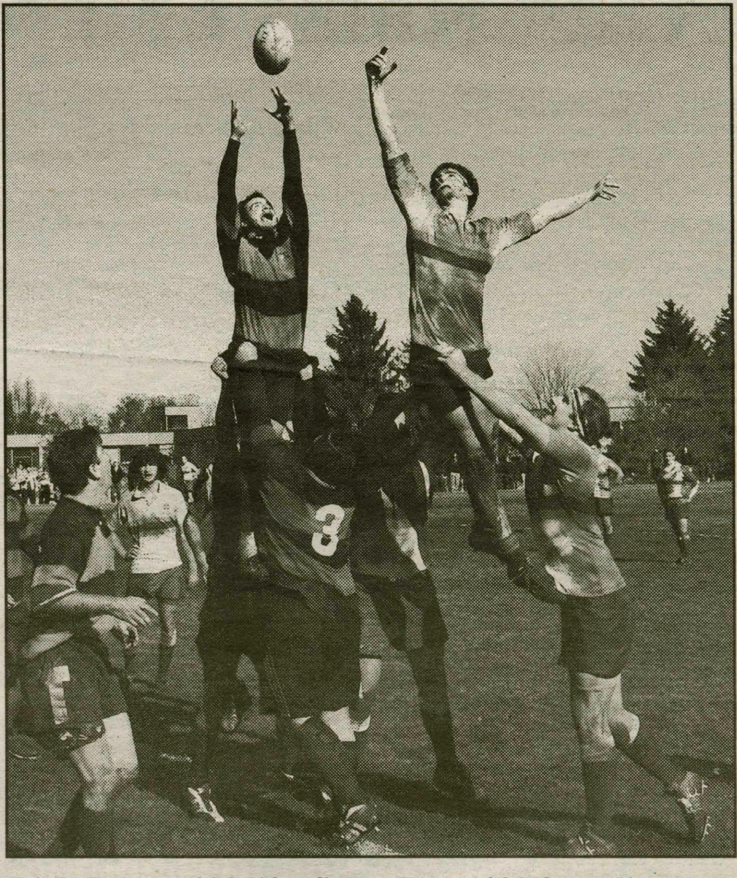
The summer sun shined over Minor Field as the grass grew slowly over its hard surface. A light breeze blew through the Dark Side ash trees and one could almost hear the five-year-old rugby turf take a deep sigh in its respite from trampling cleats and falling bodies; it knew its rest was close to an end.

Another Men's Rugby season approaches and this year's team is full of grand expectations, and rightly so. The Exiles' record the last two seasons has made Men's Rugby one of the most successful sport teams at Hamilton. In 2006, the team won the Division III State Championship. In 2007 it did so again and went on to host nationals on our own campus last spring.

"We have been improving between the speed of a snake and a mongoose," stated Colden "The Boy" Prime '10, co-captain of the team.

This year, the team's focus in practice has changed due to a new training strategy. More focus has been placed on improving the B-Side, made up of the less experienced players, but whose progress will insure the successful future of the team. However, this does not mean the A-Side, composed of the more experienced players, won't keep their winning streak going.

This year's squad has been reinforced by approximately 15 new players. Most of them are first years, but a few sophomores, juniors and even seniors have joined the ranks of the Exiles.



Rich Bryant '08 lifts Steve Rowe '09 for a line out.

COURTESY OF GEORGE VON METZSCH '09

Members of the Exiles Rugby team form a scrum against William Patterson.

With a larger team, and a training program aimed at quickly improving the new players as well as the veterans, the future of the Exiles will hopefully be one of success.

"In the long run," stated Steve Rowe '09, co-captain of the team, "we would like to have a sustainable A and B side".

Come out this Saturday at 1 p.m. to Minor Field and support the Exiles in their first home game against Lafayette.

Americans Embrace Athletes' Olympic Triumphs

by Andrew Harris '11
Sports Writer

The stories of the 2008 Beijing Summer Games were supposed to be about the poor air quality, oppressive Beijing heat and humidity, and a reflection on China's record of human rights violations. The media, sports and otherwise, fed their own stories by lamenting the dearth of athletes in the limelight, and then proceeding to air an expose on China's appalling environmental standards. When the final medal was awarded, however, the overwhelming image of the games was one of admiration for remarkable athletic feats, especially from Americans.

The only place to begin any discussion of these Games is with Michael Phelps. The Baltimore-raised swimmer absolutely dominated the pool, providing the signature moment of the competition with his first place finish in the 100-meter fly by .001 of a second. Apart from winning a record eight gold medals and breaking seven world records, Phelps served as the face of the U.S. contingent that ultimately led the world in total medals won, with 110.

In a close second in importance to Phelps were the men's and women's gymnastics teams. The men performed above all expectations to snag a bronze, while the women made some costly mistakes, but still took home the silver by a comfortable margin. Individually, Nastia Liukin and Shawn Johnson finished one-two in the all-around, Liukin picked up five medals in total, and Johnson won four, including gold in her last event, the beam.

Angelo Taylor left Beijing with quite an unexpected story. A gold medalist in the 400 meter hurdles at the Sydney Games in 2000, Taylor missed Athens with injuries, and had fallen from his perch on top of the event. He was even arrested in 2005, dropped from his sponsorship with Nike, and was working in Atlanta as an electrician when he decided to refocus. After finishing in the third qualifying spot at the U.S. trials, Taylor came into Beijing under the radar. Taylor finished far above all expectations, leading a U.S. sweep in the 400 meters, and giving him gold medals eight years apart.

HTTP://LATIMESBLOG.LATIMES.COM

Michael Phelps celebrates with teammate Ryan Lochte in Bejing.

Those eight years, however, pale in comparison to swimmer Dara Torres. A 41 year old mother, she made her debut in 1984 at the Los Angeles Games, and has competed in five Olympics since, including Beijing. Torres qualified in two events, but decided to focus on her specialty, the 50 meter freestyle. Although the ending was not exactly as she had predicted, Torres still finished with the silver medal, making her the oldest swimming medalist in Olympic history.

The wrestling events at this year's Olympics proved that even the smaller events can have big stories. Henry Cejudo, a 21 year old who had only competed in one top-level tournament before Beijing, took home gold in the 55kg division. Moreover, Cejudo's parents were originally illegal aliens from Mexico, and he lived in abject poverty for most of his childhood. Instead of going to college, as virtually all top flight wrestlers choose to do, Cejudo opted to enter the Olympic program at age 17, and won a gold medal just four years later.

Even with all these stories of individual U.S. athletic prowess, the 110 total medals remain largely unaccounted for. Team achievements, like the men's basketball "Redeem Team" winning gold, and the women's basketball team continuing its dominance in gold medal fashion in international play, help display the depth of the United States Olympic effort. By the end of the Beijing Games, the stories were not of the flaws in Chinese structure, but rather the embracing of athletic triumphs, much like the newscasters had hoped.

Most emblematic of this message were the men's and women's indoor volleyball teams. At the very beginning of the Games, the in-laws and wife of the head men's volleyball coach were attacked by an unidentified assailant while touring a Beijing landmark. The attacker later committed suicide. The coach's father-in-law was killed, while the other two were seriously injured. The coach missed a few games, but the team persevered and eventually won the gold medal. The women, also affected because the coach's wife was a former Olympic volleyball player, surpassed expectations to win the silver. These struggles represent the true spirit of the Olympic Games, rather than political pressures and considerations.

A Hamilton College Student Publication, Clinton, NY Volume XLIX Number 1

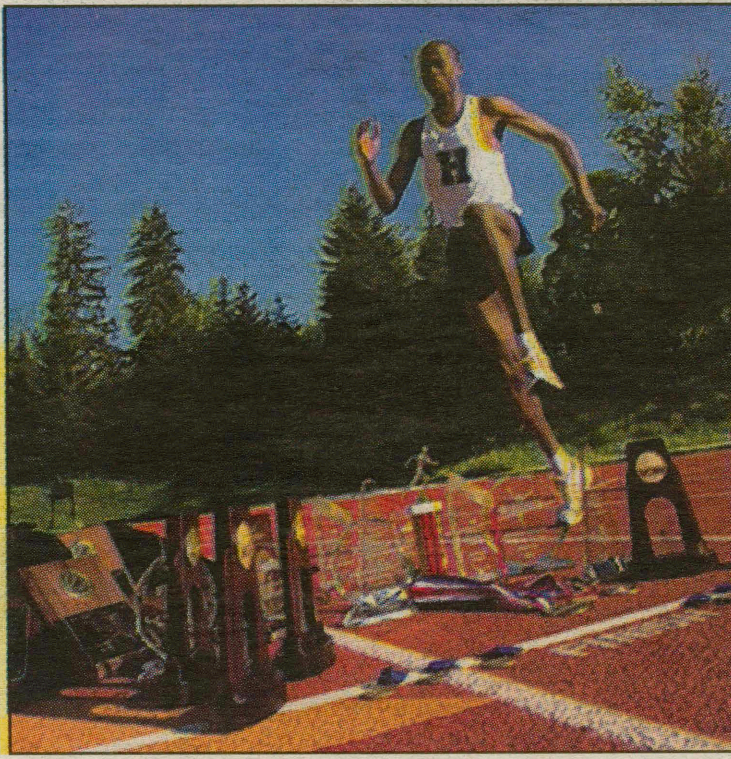
H SPECTATOR SPORTS

September 5, 2008

Peter Kosgei Captures National Recognition

2007-2008 Awards and Recognition

- Face in the Crowd Honor by Sports Illustrated
- 2007 NCAA Division III Atlantic Region Men's Athlete of the Year
- 2008 NCAA Division III Indoor Track Athlete of the Year
- NCAA Division III All-American
- Liberty League Men's Runner of the Year
- NESCAC Cross Country Most Outstanding Performer Award
- Five Time NESCAC Cross Country Runner of the Week
- Four Time NY State Collegiate Track Conference Runner of the Week
- Two Time Division III Track Athlete of the Week



by Scott Bickard '11
Sports Writer

"Well guys, it turns out there's something Peter Kosgei '10 is not good at," a mischievous Will Reid '10 announced to the Hamilton Cross Country Team during an afternoon run. "He just got his permit and is learning to drive."

As we all got a good laugh picturing Kosgei practicing his driving skills, I could not help also picturing just how good he will be this season and in the years to come. Here is a man who did not begin to run competitively until he arrived at Hamilton two years ago. After running just one race in cross country as a freshman, Kosgei's career took off in spring track in the steeplechase, a 3000 meter extravaganza with four barriers and one water pit per lap.

"I had my eye on that event," he said with a smile.

Five national championships later, including back-to-back steeple titles, Kosgei has become an elite runner at any level.

Ironically, the Kosgei story starts with his brain and not his legs. He was admitted to Hamilton on the basis of high test scores and an impressive application. Coming from a tribe in Kenya known for its world class distance runners may have peaked the interest of the athletics department, but make no mistake about it: Kosgei is an academic. In the six months between high school graduation and Hamilton, he decided to teach physics and chemistry at a local high school. At Hamilton, he is constantly pacing the workload. When Keith Gross '09 spotted Kosgei reading his chemistry book literally minutes before his race, he was shocked, as most runners are locked into an almost icy concentration in the 30 to 40 minute warm-up period.

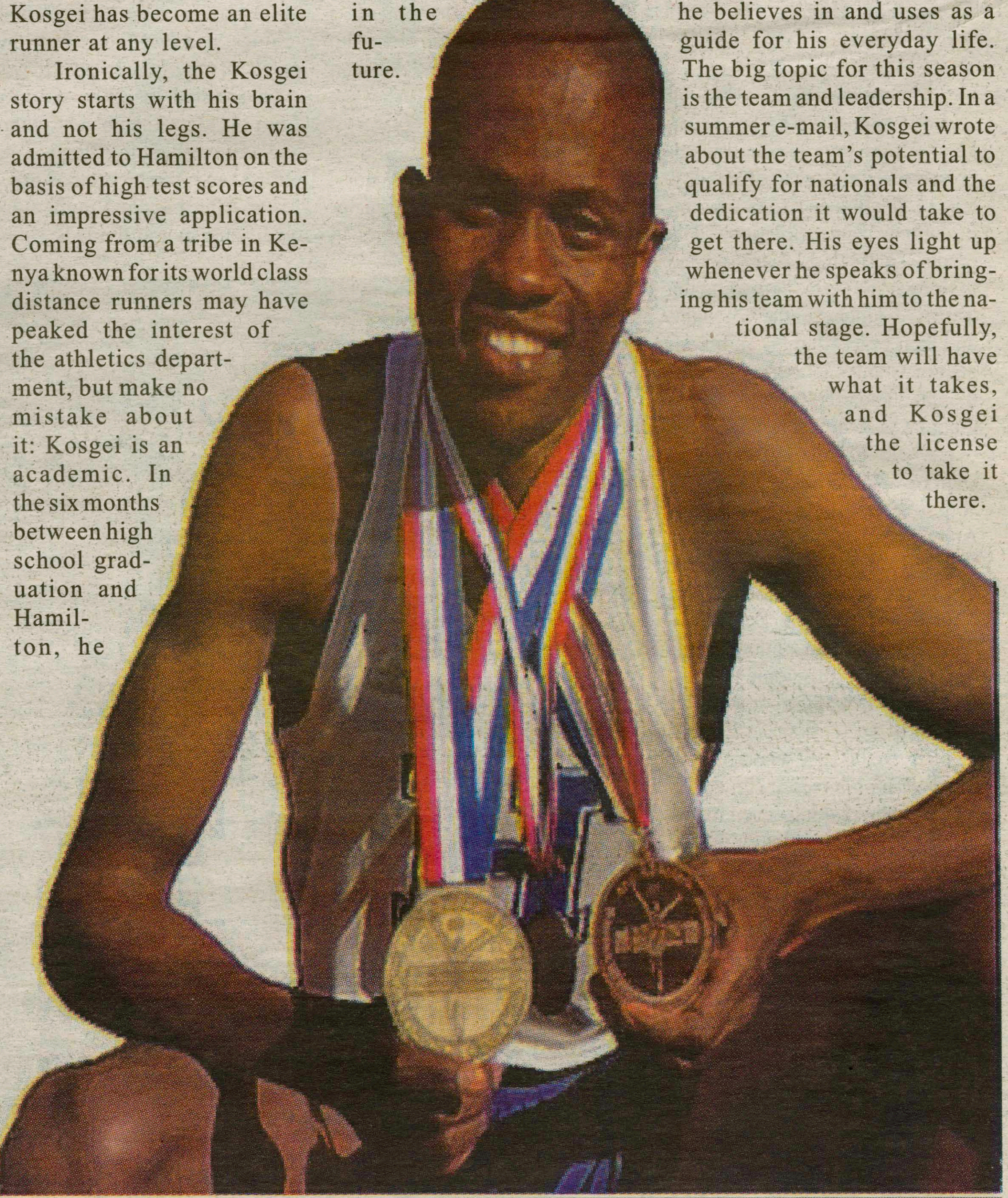
"Peter, shouldn't you be focused on your race?" he asked.

"Reading makes me happy," Kosgei replied, demonstrating an appreciation for the college experience and opportunity that many forget.

When I asked Kosgei if last year's cross country national champion (against whom Kosgei finished second) is returning this year, he told me that it does not even matter. Yes, Kosgei is ready to win his first cross country title, and will be the overwhelming favorite this year. In his soft and melodious Swahili accent, he told me he is only seventy-five percent of what he will be in the future. We both could only laugh at the absurd prospects of that statement. The potential of this runner is unfathomable at times.

Unchallenged at the mile during winter track of last year, Kosgei was finally forced to chase runners down during the distance medley relay (consisting of an 800, 1200, 400 meter, and a mile anchor). Hamilton was trailing considerably when Kosgei set the stadium on fire to run a 4:03 anchor mile to vault the group into second place. A sub four minute mile is a very real possibility this track season.

The Kosgei legend can be comically humbling at times as well. Midway through a race against the highly touted Erik Donahoe '08 of St. Lawrence, Kosgei who knows him only by name, asks the front pack, "Who is Donahoe?" Leading the group, a puffing Donahoe identifies himself and then looks back to see Kosgei easily catch up and eventually coast by for the victory.

Every once in a while, Kosgei will say some type of wise proverb, messages he believes in and uses as a guide for his everyday life. The big topic for this season is the team and leadership. In a summer e-mail, Kosgei wrote about the team's potential to qualify for nationals and the dedication it would take to get there. His eyes light up whenever he speaks of bringing his team with him to the national stage. Hopefully, the team will have what it takes, and Kosgei the license to take it there.